



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

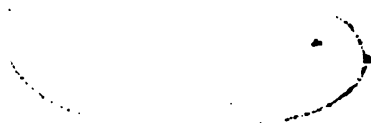
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



50.1216.

256 e. 15713

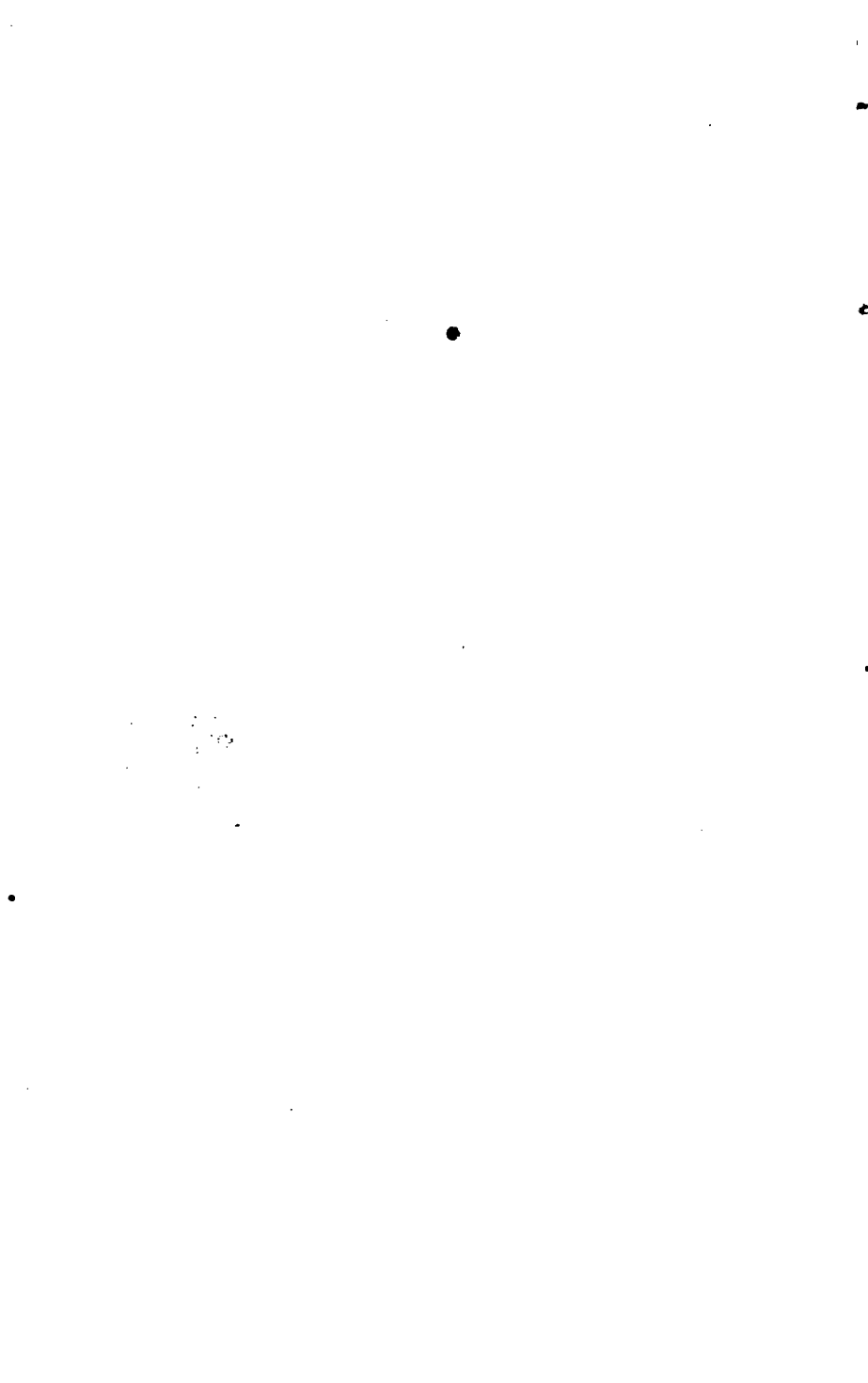




ADA GREVILLE.

—

VOL. II.



ADA GREVILLE;

OR,

WOMAN'S CONSTANCY.

BY PETER LEICESTER, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF

"ARTHUR OF BRITTANY," "BOSWORTH FIELD," &c.

—Her love once given,
Woman gives life, gives hope, gives heaven.



IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

E. CHURTON, 26, HOLLES STREET.

1850.

LONDON:

Printed by Schulze and Co., 13 Poland Street.

ADA GREVILLE;
OR,
WOMAN'S CONSTANCY.

CHAPTER I.

There, in the far mid heaven, it stands on high,
Its broad expanse uplifts the nearer sky ;
And angels come and spread their mantles there,
To bid the mariner of storms beware.

MOST severe was Ada's disappointment ; for a time, it altogether prostrated her spirits ; nor knew she clearly what passed around her. So nearly reached, and yet lost ! It seemed a lot almost too sad to bear. Her mind was sunk in its intensity of thought ; and the circumstances of her landing at the Cape, the long sail from where the ship anchored, the landing amid the bustle of the pier, the strange mixture of cos-

tumes, and of people, and of languages, were not things of which her mind had ever note : indeed, if the safety of Mrs. Burdett's personalities had depended on Ada's care, it is more than probable they would have been found wanting ; it was, therefore, so far fortunate that Captain Severin had the charge of them to pass the custom-house.

Nor was it until after a good night's rest, when the indescribable luxury of a first night on shore, after a two months' rocking on the ocean, fairly won her from herself, that she recovered her usual elasticity.

Mrs. Burdett had gone into private lodgings ; she did not fancy the hotel—'Crowded, noisy, dirty,' said the asides. On her former voyages she had stayed with friends, no longer resident at the Cape, and had been recommended by them to a boarding-house, kept by a widow lady, and whose domicile was opposite the parade-ground, a fine open common, where they might gaze, and scent the fresh green to their hearts' content.

Before them was the Table Mountain, in all its

grandeur and magnificence; and when they were tired of looking at mere inanimate things, they might watch the carriages driving by, for every one keeps a carriage at the Cape; and the soldiers manœuvring; and sometimes the Hottentots would crowd the intervening road with every kind of good thing, which could conduce to the comfort of the residents, or tempt the curiosity of strangers.

Mrs. Burton, the proprietress of the house, was a buxom, good-looking woman, very active and very intelligent; two unmarried daughters lived with her, both remarkably handsome girls, though indeed beauty seemed to be a very common property with the generality of the women in the place; one of which daughters showed very decided intentions of doing what her parents had done before her, inasmuch as a young man, an agent in the vicinity, visited constantly at the house as her future husband. And, what struck Mrs. Burdett as being very odd, and at the same time very disagreeable, not only did the mother dine with her boarders, and the daugh-

ters too, who, after scrubbing, and cleaning, and bed-making, and doing all manner of other things in the morning, appeared most splendidly dressed at dinner-time ; but the lover came, and various friends, all no doubt extremely estimable persons in their way ; but being vulgar, uneducated people, and withal ill-bred, their introduction, and the necessity of holding out the hand of good-fellowship too, did not quite agree with the old lady's notions of things ; especially as she had brought the three Miss McGregors to the house with her ; an arrangement, in reality, influenced by the wish of their respective maids not to be separated.

When, however, Mrs. Burdett found that it was the common practice in the place, and moreover thought that as it was for a mere few days, it did not matter mightily, she grew more reconciled, and amused herself in her own quiet way with their proceedings ; sometimes not slightly contributing to their amusement by her *naïve* asides.

Ada was very nicely disposed of. She and

Maria had an excellent bed-room; had their meals by themselves; in fact, could not have wished for better accommodations.

Maria had managed to get a list of the late arrivals; indeed, Ada would not let her rest until she had got one; nor did she herself rest, until she had found the announcement of the 'Sappho's' arrival, all well, with one loved name amongst them, on which her eyes rested with fondest pleasure. Ah! did Howard think of her with all the same intensity of love? *More* love he could not feel!

Even this satisfaction, small as it was, proved very balm and honey to her wounded spirit.

"I hope the people make you comfortable, Alice?" her mistress inquired, the third evening after their arrival, as she took some coffee to her.

"Quite so, Ma'am," was Ada's answer.

"I like Mrs. Burton very much," the old lady replied; "sensible, shrewd woman." Aside, ("Can't say so much for the daughters, though; too smart, flippant—hope honest.")

"The elder daughter, Bella, seems a nice girl," Ada said; "she is going to be married."

"Oh, yes," her mistress replied; "that, at all events, is no secret; a black-whiskered-face man, who dined with us to-day." Aside, ("Great nuisance—hate vulgarity—Beelzebub!") Would you think it, Alice?—the lovers sit next each other at dinner, and divide everything either takes, even to a very potato; if he takes one, he cuts it in two, and gives her half, taking off her plate a similar share of anything she may have. I wonder if it is the common practice at the Cape?" Aside, ("Mem.: Ask dear Mr. Maitland—queer way.) But we'll shirk them tomorrow, at all events, Alice. Dare say they mean well; but perfect children of nature, fresh from the mine. We'll go some excursion, *pac nac*, as my gardener used to call it. I've ordered one of their clumsy vehicles to be here at nine, and you and Maria must go with us."

"Thank you, Ma'am, I am sure we shall enjoy it."

"Don't exactly know, what is best worth

seeing ; suppose you ask Mrs. Burton to come to me." Aside ("Be bound she knows everything ; never heard such a chatter-basket.")

Alice soon returned with the lady.

"We want to take some excursion to-morrow, Mrs. Burton," Mrs. Burdett addressed her ; "pray, where would you advise us to go ?"

"Indeed, Madam," promptly replied the lady, "there are so many places of great, very great interest, I hardly know where to begin. There is our staunch old friend yonder, Table Mountain ; but perhaps you won't like to climb that—very hard work, and doubtful at times."

"Can we manage it without danger, Mrs. Burton ? shall have my young friends with me." Aside ("Pretty thing to lose one—papa *would* go on.")

"Cannot recommend ladies, exactly ; scarcely modest if there should be gentlemen, so much climbing ; and the weather has been unsettled since the storm, and it might be misty : a lady lately, Madam, was kept up there a whole night and day : mist came on : guide afraid to stir—

poor thing ! almost out of her mind ; dared not to open her eyes for fear of being giddy, and falling over the rocks."

"That won't do, at any rate, Mrs. Burton ; what next ?"

"Then, there's the Wineburg vineyards, Madam, very interesting, great extent ; it is our great wine depôt ; and from thence you can go on to Constantia, and taste the wine—our best wine, Madam, no doubt, you know : then there's Green Point, beautiful drive, fine view of the sea, ships coming in from India : many beautiful houses and gardens. And then, I must not forget Baron Ludwig's gardens, to day's the day, too, for seeing them ; the old gentleman only allows two days in the week : and, if you are fond of gardens, there are the Zoological Gardens at the Governor's, with the live animals, and other curiosities—beautiful walk ! and then there's the observatory ; we have often very great men come from England to make observations ; fine establishment, just put up, well worth seeing : then there's—"

"Stay, stay, Mrs. Burton," the old lady

called out, "you are giving us a week's work, and we have but a day to do it: I should like to go to Green Point, as I have some friends there that I should wish to inquire after. Constantia, too, I should like to visit, and the old Baron's gardens: I remember when I was last here I could not go." Aside ("Cholera morbus, very bad.")

"The coach will be here at nine, Ma'am," said Mrs. Burton.

"Thank you, Mrs. Burton," said Mrs. Burdett; and Mrs. Burton seeing that she was no longer wanted, and being wanted elsewhere, withdrew.

Punctually the following morning the vehicle came; a great lumbering thing it was, with four equally great horses to drag it along; indeed, they were four larger horses than the usually large ones which are seen at the Cape; *why*, Mrs. Burdett did not know, as every individual of the party as she *asided*, was as light as a feather! of course she spoke metaphorically.

And in it were promptly deposited Mrs. Burdett and the three Miss McGregors, with a

variety of creature comforts; the two maids taking charge of the rumble behind.

"Plenty of room, my dears," said the old lady, as she settled herself in her place, "for all the Maitlands, if they will join us." Aside ("Hope dear Mr. M. will—so lively.")

But when they reached Green Point, and found out the Maitlands' lodgment, they met with a check upon their day's pleasure; poor Mr. Maitland was anything but lively; their son had been so ill ever since they had landed. He had been in such a low, desponding, nervous way, they were quite alarmed; he scarcely would leave his bed-room, and when he did, it was at eventide, when he would wander on the beach alone, if possible, and stay there till almost midnight.

His father had remonstrated with him, but in vain: he almost feared for his reason, though his memory could not tell, nor yet his mother's, of any hereditary curse of that kind; but he was very strange.

Of course, neither he or Mrs. Maitland joined the excursion party, and to one, at least, the disappointment was great.

"Poor Mr. M.!" exclaimed Mrs. Burdett, as the carriage drove off from their friends' door; "I am very sorry for him, such a nice young man, too!" Then the asides ("Only son—such promise! so polite to old ladies—always good sign; dear Mr. M.!")

But in spite of the good lady's sympathies the carriage drove on, and in due time arrived at Constantia. Here they saw the immense stores of the luscious wine, that takes its name from the district, and what was better, they tasted it too, pronouncing it most capital.

And thence they went on to a most romantic spot hard by, called Paradise, which indeed well deserved its name. A green, secluded nook, at the foot of the high mountain, where the rippling streams made music in the unbroken silence of its seclusion; unbroken, save when the busy warblers of the groves put forth their melodies, and filled the pleased air with gladness.

It was the very spot for a pic-nic, and here Mrs. Burdett had intended a very merry meeting, sadly frustrated by George Maitland's illness;

for not all her own vivacity and well-meant efforts could remedy the blank, which the absence of so essential a portion of her party had occasioned.

To one, indeed, the loss was hailed almost as a boon—the removal of much constraint; and Ada could fully enjoy the calm peace of the spot, and its pure, refreshing breezes; could wander about its mazy beauties, find fresh interest in each new feature that presented itself, and feel the companionship of her own thoughts too pleasurable to desire that any stranger should intermeddle therewith.

She, at least, was fully content—almost regretted when the declining day bade them retrace their steps, and leave a spot where she had found such content.

But there was yet one object to claim their notice, for which they had now barely allowed sufficient time, especially considering the very sturdy nature of their mode of transit; and, in fact, it was so late when they arrived at the Botanical Gardens, so are the Baron's grounds called, that, to the regret and annoyance of the

whole party, the hour was past for their being open, and the gates closed.

They were just about to re-enter the carriage, when a very venerable-looking old gentleman, with nice, blooming complexion, drove from the gardens in a low pony-chaise, drawn by two very pretty ponies.

The party were standing, at the moment, by the gate, some of them trying to get a peep into the interior; when the gentleman, observing them, pulled up, and said in a good-tempered voice :

“ Too late, ladies, to-day ; past the time.”

“ How very unfortunate !” Mrs. Burdett exclaimed in unrestrained disappointment ; “ we could not get our lumbering horses on, and we sail again in two days.”

“ Strangers, I perceive ?” the gentleman said.

“ On our way to Bombay, passengers by the ‘ Triton.’ Young ladies heard so much of Baron Ludwig’s Gardens.”

“ And the young ladies,” gallantly replied the old gentleman—they were three genteel,

pretty-looking girls, to be sure—"shall not be disappointed. I am Baron Ludwig, and will have great pleasure in showing you my collection."

He at once alighted, and led the way through the gate.

It was a garden of terraces, beautifully laid out, and kept in the nicest order, at a large annual expense. It was the proprietor's hobby, and, as he told the ladies, he spent all the money on them that he had to spend. His ambition was to have a specimen of every known tree in the world; and he was indefatigable, nor spared any pains or expense to procure them.

He liked good listeners, to see that his visitors admired, and really took an interest in what they saw; and certainly he could not have had a more active hearer, or one who might give more opportunities for hearing, than good Mrs. Burdett, who asked after everything, and answered everything.

Among other matters of interest, the Baron had some great pets in the shape of gold-fish.

"Know me as well as a dog would."

"How vastly curious, Baron," returned the busy lady; "but everything is so curious!" Aside, ("Extraordinary man—take a life—ever-green himself.") But don't see any fish, Baron; don't see one."

"No, no, my good Madam," said the Baron, they're like good children, they wait till they're called: when I ring my bell, you'll see."

"Fishes *hear*, Baron? Nay, nay, we know better in England than that; at least, English fishes can't." Aside, ("Hear! talk as like.")

"I cannot exactly say what English fishes will do, my good Madam; but you shall see for yourself what mine can do;" and, ringing a little bell he had in his pocket, there was a very prompt confirmation of his statement, the fishes popping up all round the basin.

The Baron chuckled at the result, and seemed highly amused at the good lady's free expression of her surprise; indeed, it may be safely said, that her whole manner had much of the same effect upon him, for he seemed never to be tired of showing and explaining to her; and when, at length, they had been the complete round of the

gardens, he parted from her more as an old friend, than the mere acquaintance of an hour.

The next day was a table-cloth one. The Mountain was covered in the morning, and the wind rose, and the red sand blew about, and all was as disagreeable as could be. Blow, blow, blow ! scarcely possible to stand against it.

The following day was little better ; but, as they were to re-embark on the following, they were compelled to go out to make sundry small purchases ; and their great surprise was, at such a distance from England, how completely the shops and their contents were English.

They met Captain Severin in the street.

" Ten o'clock, to-morrow, ladies," he said, as he hurried past. " Taking stores on board now ; difficult to get."

About an hour afterwards, as they were returning to their lodgings, they met him again, very hurried and very hot.

" Boat swamped !—all our stores gone ! Kept another four days at least."

What a sickening feel did the words give to Ada !

And kept they were, not for four days only, but for quite a week more. The stores could not be furnished : there had been such an unusual number of ships, that the common stock of supplies was exhausted, and they had to wait until more could be procured from the Kaffir country.

Perhaps few regretted the delay ; it might be none—none save poor Ada !—to her, every hour's delay was so much additional suffering. Oh ! suspense !—a weary, weary guest thou art !

And yet the days passed quickly enough with all ; with Mrs. Burdett's party, in particular, as the good lady took advantage of the additional time, and of all fitting opportunities, to see everything worth being seen.

It was the fourteenth day after their arrival at the Cape that they left it. The stores were not completed till the preceding evening ; and Captain Severin had sent word round to his passengers to be on board by eight o'clock in the morning, that no farther time might be lost.

The morning was anything but promising, the cloud was still on the Table Mountain ; and

though the land-wind blew not strongly, yet there was every sign of its intention to do so. Luckily, Mrs. Burton, with great forethought, had called her lodgers early, and pointing to the prognostications, had urged their reaching the ship as soon as was practicable, if they wished to save themselves a ducking; so that they were on board soon after seven, and even by that time, the wind had so much risen that it was awkward enough to get from the boat upon deck. But in less than half an hour, and as the great bulk of the passengers were passing from the shore to the ship, the wind came furiously down the mountain sides, and seemed almost to blow the boats out of the water. And there was such rowing, and shouting, and screaming, and swearing, and so much real danger, as well to reach the vessel—for one boat was fairly blown out to sea—as when reached, to get on board; and the various passengers were fairly hauled on deck like so many drowned mice, the lady part terrified and fainting.

On counting over his passengers, however,

Captain Severin found his complement all right ; though it had cost him two good hours to get it so ; the ship all the while straining on her cables in the furious wind, as a high-mettled horse impatient for the race : and he was only too glad to weigh anchor, and scud before the squall, turning its restless disquiet into an agent of good.

And in a very brief space did Cape Town and its accompaniments dwindle into indistinctness : soon its mighty table land seem but as a sullen, dim incubus upon the waters.

CHAPTER II.

Strike on ! strike on ! 'tis for your life !

'Tis all in vain the unequal strife,

And death so near !—

THERE had been little change among the passengers on board the 'Triton' for her stay at the Cape. On meeting at dinner that day, all the former faces appeared, except the Byroms and poor George Maitland, who was still an invalid, and kept his cabin.

Mrs. Byrom was no loss, for she was as much a stranger when she left them, as the day she came on board, and her place was supplied by very nice people, a Mr. James, one of the Company's Judges, who had been on sick-leave at

the Cape, and his only daughter, a good-tempered-looking girl of about three-and-twenty.

Miss James had possession of Mrs. Byrom's late cabin, and which was immediately opposite to Mrs. Burdett's. She was of a very friendly, companionable disposition, and soon became acquainted, especially with her neighbours, Mrs. Burdett in particular, whose bustling, busy character amused her excessively. She had no attendant with her, her own maid having thought proper to take unto herself a husband, only a day or two before the 'Triton' left, without any previous intimation of such intention; and she had not been able to supply her place. The young lady, therefore, was very glad to avail herself of Ada's good offices, and acknowledged them in her usually frank manner by the kindest notice.

The greatest change, indeed, in the ship, was in the Maitlands' cabin: their little levees had ceased; and Mr. Maitland, in place of being one of the liveliest spirits on board, was now one of the saddest.

Their son George still frequented their cabin

as before, but he would stalk to it almost like a ghost, and no one was allowed to enter when he was there, except Mrs. Burdett, who still seemed in favour: no music now was heard, but in its place were sighs—*they* were frequent enough, and much earnest whispering: and then George Maitland's appearance as he walked sometimes on deck!—it was but seldom—so changed, and so wan, his cheeks pale, his eyes sunken, and his voice so husky and sad! indeed, it was pitiable to see him, it grieved the sympathizing heart of more than one who looked on him.

"Never saw such an altered person in my whole life," Mrs. Burdett suddenly exclaimed one evening, as she sat talking to Miss James, and giving her a few details of their fellow-passengers, "as that George Maitland: he used to be such a nice, conversable youth, and so very attentive." Aside, ("To be sure, attentive still to *me*!—mighty cold though, now.) And such a good musician, Miss James—used to be the delight of us all."

"He seems very delicate," said Miss James.

“Delicate! my dear? Oh! worse than that. His mother tells me that he never sleeps; sometimes will not go to bed the livelong night. For my part, I am afraid all is not right here,” pointing to her head. Then aside, (“Always had a wild look—his eyes wandering—nervous twitching.”) It is a sad thing for his parents—only child.”

“They seem nice people,” said Miss James.

“Delightful! my dear. Dear Mr. M., a perfect pet; so merry—*used* to be, I should say.” Aside, (“Sadly changed for the worse—only stay in life—consumption.”)

“He is young, dear Mrs. Burdett. Change of climate may do him good; it has quite restored papa.”

“Mr. James is the very picture of health, my dear; and such quiet humour.” Aside, (“Can give a quiet punch—sly hit—Green did not like; nasty man!”)

“Not my papa, I hope;” the young lady only half understood the aside.

“Oh, dear, gracious me!—no, my dear;” and the old lady looked perfectly horrified. “That

Mr. Green, I mean ; that impudent man with the pug nose."

"He attacked papa about the Suttees ;—but papa knows all about that : he has been a Judge now for six years, and understands the Indian law thoroughly in all its points."

"No doubt, my dear, no doubt. Where is your papa stationed, pray ?"

"He has one of the Madras circuits. He was very ill, when he left Madras, ordered off to the Cape at almost a day's notice."

"Been long at the Cape, my dear ?"

"About eighteen months : we might have taken another year, but papa feels quite better now. I am so glad we came in the 'Triton : ' nice girls those McGregors ; and what a nice maid you have, Mrs. Burdett."

"Very respectable girl, and very attentive, my dear."

"She is very civil and obliging to me, for which I am equally beholden to dear Mrs. Burdett ; but do you know what a strange fancy I have got into my head ?"

"Not I, indeed, my dear ; should be very

sorry to stand Godmother to any young lady's fancies, and as to chronicling them!—my dear, did you ever see a whirlpool,—or a cataract might do? did you ever see them heave the lead in a fathomless sea? did you ever look through the air, and try to see what it was made of? because, my dear, if you have, you may form some small idea of what wild, whirligig, incomprehensible fancies *can* get into a young lady's head.” Aside, (“Do they always know, themselves?”)

“Well, then, I will not put you to the trouble of thinking, dear soul; but I have a strange notion that young Maitland takes a great interest in Alice.”

“Takes what!” the old lady looked bewildered; “takes an interest?”

“Admires her, Mrs. Burdett, admires; deeply in love with her; I have seen him look so earnestly at her when she has been working on deck, and he at his melancholy saunterings; seen him gaze, when he thought no one saw, with such a devoted and all-that-sort-of-thing

look, and have noticed a flush mantle his pale cheek, if by chance her eyes turned towards him."

"You don't say so, my dear! really don't say so! and I not know it!" Aside, ("Can't be—impossible—green eye.) And what more, pray, my dear? Does Alice know, think you?"

"I cannot tell; cannot judge at all; perfect puzzle. She must know how pretty, how beautiful she is; and let her alone for vanity; must see his admiration; am sure is purely modest; and yet she seems to me as untouched, as if he looked upon the coldest ice."

"And I not see it!" the bewilderment was very troublesome; "not even suspect it!" Aside, ("Attention to old ladies, forsooth! And that was it? really!")

"I have still another fancy, Mrs. Burdett," resumed the young lady, seeing the asides so likely to predominate; "I fancy the young man's illness has something to do with this said admiration."

"Never, surely, never; and yet, perhaps his pride won't let him marry so much beneath him-

self." Aside, ("Dear me, how blind!—never dreamt—proud family—how very blind!")

"Now, see if I am not right."

"But don't allude to it, my dear, to any one: promise me this."

"Surely."

The aside, ("Dear me, how very blind! Attentive, forsooth!—after all, for the maid's sake!—how very blind!")

At this moment there was a great commotion overhead, and one of the young middies came running down the companion:

"Such an immense shark!" he said; "going to catch it."

"Do come, Mrs. Burdett," said the young lady; "I never saw one taken."

Mrs. Burdett called to Maria to let her young people know, and hobbled to the poop, where they found several of the gentlemen very busy with their preparations. Some were testing the line—it was such a monster!—others baiting the hook. The middy, who now came running with a strong new line, seemingly the director of the sport:

"Do let us have the new line, Mr. Green," he said, quite out of breath; "he's such an immense fish; he'll break the other—I know he will."

"Not he," grunted Mr. Green, who was pulling at the old line with all his might.

"Look, ladies," said the second mate, who was standing by, watching the operations; "see! the bloody wretch will not show himself, but sends his forager. You see that broad, silver-like fish; that's the pilot-fish, ladies, that always finds the wretch his victuals."

"Do you mean the red and green fish?" asked Mrs. Burdett.

"Yes, Ma'am; it's all colours. You'll see, when the bait's thrown in, how it will smell it first, before its master comes,"

"For heaven's sake, Edith, do not lean over that way," said Miss James's father, who that moment came up; "I once saw a young lady overbalance herself, and a sudden lurch of the ship pitch her overboard. I fancy, my dear, it would be an awkward mistake, just now? What a monster!"

"Now, Evans, my boy," said Mr. Green, "tie the end of the line fast, and give me the bait."

"You had better let Mr. Holmes throw it," said the middy.

"Give it me, you monkey," said Mr. Green, with sullen anger.

The middy did so, but whispered to the mate, "He's quite tipsy, Mr. Holmes, and will make a mess of it; but it's his own line."

"He's not so tipsy as all that," said the mate. "Don't meddle with him; he's just touched enough to be quarrelsome."

"He's always touched, I think," said the middy, as he gave the bait into Mr. Green's hands.

Mr. Green took it sullenly, and leaning over the stern, lowered the line slowly down :

"We'll tantalize the wretch," he hiccupped ; "See, there's his pilot ; and now the ugly beast. You greedy devil !"

He continued to pitch the bait nearer and nearer to the fish, which could be seen plainly

enough; his eager eyes distinguishable at times, as he neared the bait.

In throwing the line, however, Green got it entangled round the stern, and leaned still farther over to unloose it.

"Please hold him, some one," cried the mate; "the man will be over."

It was too late: he had indeed overbalanced himself. A cry of sudden terror burst from him, and a heavy plunge told that he had fallen right into the sea.

What screams and confusion there were on deck! Some of the women fainted. "Man overboard!" was quickly called from a dozen voices, and reverberated through the ship; and there was a sudden rush towards the poop.

The mate had, at the instant, taken up a rope, and thrown it towards the struggling man, who was seen striking boldly for the rudder.

"Hold this, Mr. Green," he called loudly to him. "Quick, quick. The pilot has already scented him," he said to those around; "ay, and there's the ugly beast."

"Hold ! quick ! quick !" was called out here and there.

Mr. Green, who was an excellent swimmer, had promptly caught the rope, and twisted it round his arm.

"Hold fast," called out the mate.

"Hold fast !" re-echoed a dozen voices.

"Now, pull all !" called out the mate. "Pull quickly ; now, now ! Too late, too late !—there's the white belly : the greedy devil has him." There was a shriek of such unearthly wildness. "Good God ! he has bitten him in two !"

They had lifted the unfortunate man's chest above the water, when the fish took him ; the trunk still, for a moment, clung to the rope, and there was a look of intense agony on the upraised face, as, horribly convulsed, with its quivering eyes turned into the brain, it was for an instant seen ; but the arm soon relapsed its hold, and the mutilated trunk fell back into a pool of blood.

"It's no use," cried out the mate ; the men were lowering the long-boat ; "it's all over."

The dying trunk had quivered, for a moment,

on the surface, in mortal agonies, when the monster was again seen rushing to him. He turned upon his back; they saw the opening of his greedy jaws, and as they closed, there was nought on the water but the bubbles where he had sunk.

What more is life?—a bubble, brief as that!

There was a trembling silence on the poop; they looked at each other in speechless horror: some were sick, some ready to faint.

“What a fearful death!” said Mr. James, as he bore his daughter to her cabin.

For days afterwards, there was no conversation on board, but what had reference to Mr. Green’s horrible death; those who had seen all, filling up the gap to those who had seen but part; and these retelling the particulars, again and again, to those who had not witnessed any part of the catastrophe: all full of plans by which the unfortunate man’s life might have been saved; and many with marvellous tales of similar accidents they had either seen themselves, or been told by those who had.

But, in time, the interest died away; or, per-

haps, all had been said that could be said; the future had brought new events, and, like all other sublunary things, it dimmed away into the dreamy past.

It was some days afterwards, that, as Ada was reading in her cabin, her mistress came to her from the Maitlands', where she had been paying one of her morning visitations.

"Will you mind, Alice," she said, "showing Mrs. Maitland how you do the crochet-work for the purses? She is very anxious to do one."

"With pleasure," said Ada. "When shall I go?"

"She is alone now; perhaps it would be as well to go at once." Aside, ("Quiet enough, now-a-days—no music—no anything—no anybody.")

Ada went. Mrs. Maitland was seated at her little table, evidently lost in thought. We have not described her personal appearance.

Small, thin, delicate-looking, with a very softened expression of countenance, and a calmness, not by any means a coldness, of manner;

still nice-looking, and very neat : every hair seemed in its place ; the very frills around her wrist as if without a merest wrinkle ; herself very straight and very stiff, no starch could have made her said frills more so. She spoke slowly, and with a pleasing modulation of voice.

“ Come in, Alice. Kind Mrs. Burdett assures me, that you will not object to instruct me in that very beautiful stitch, in which you work your purses ? ”

“ With pleasure, Ma’am,” said Ada.

“ Please bring a chair, Alice, and seat yourself beside me. It is crochet-work, I apprehend ? ”

“ It is, Ma’am. You begin by casting on ninety or a hundred stitches, according to the size of your purse—thus ; then crochet one plain row.”

“ Ah ! I observe,” said Mrs. Maitland.

“ Then thus,” continued Alice, as she did the stitch ; “ bring it over this way, which gives it the appearance that you admire.”

“ Ah ! I observe,” again said Mrs. Maitland ; “ but I am impressed with the idea, Alice, that to insure that beautiful finish which you attain,

it is indispensable to possess your taper fingers. What exquisite hands !”

“You flatter, Ma’am,” said Ada ; but she knew well enough it was true.

“No, indeed,” continued Mrs. Maitland ; “any lady in the land might plume herself on such, Alice ; but I am such an admirer of finely-moulded hands ; and Mr. Maitland, who is an excellent connoisseur—but then, my dear young person, Mr. Maitland is clever in all things—so very, very talented—declares that there is no superior evidence of high birth than chiselled hands and feet.”

“Indeed, Ma’am !” said Ada, working away. “Then crochet three stitches, miss a stitch—then make a loop.”

“I observe,” nodded the lady ; “but, in truth, Alice, I am exceedingly more interested in yourself : I love to study the character. Mr. Maitland says it is instinctive with me ; and Mr. Maitland is a very observant philosopher, Alice—a very talented man indeed ; and surely, Alice, these, I may well term them delicate, hands, cannot always have been doomed to menial

occupation? I am impressed with a notion, that there must have been a period in your existence, when a less lowly condition attached to you."

"I strive to be content with my position, Ma'am," said Ada; "crochet a loop through, and two stitches."

"But pray, my dear," persisted Mrs. Maitland, "wherever did you attain those sculptured hands? indeed, my admiration constrains me to ask for satisfaction."

"I suppose nature gave me them," said Ada; "make a stitch and miss one."

"But never for such a destination," replied the lady. "I would not, for the world, be deemed impertinent, nor judge me such, I pray, my dear child; but I am impressed with a strong conviction that your birth must have entitled you to far higher consideration; your parents—"

"Were very plain, good sort of people," said Ada; "one plain row, through one; do you see, Ma'am?"

"Yes, my dear, and I see you too: now do

not take offence, Alice, it is my interest in you that asks—am I really to understand that your birth is as lowly as your present condition, and your origin nought more elevated?”

“Excuse me, Mrs. Maitland,” said Ada, finding that the crochet-work would not ward off the attack, “I do not tell my history, even to my mistress: there are circumstances—painful circumstances—”

“Ah! I was so impressed,” returned the lady; “I knew there was mystery—observed so to Mr. Maitland, and he perfectly coincides; and Mr. Maitland, my dear young person, is a man of extraordinary discernment.”

“You arrive very rapidly at conclusions, Ma’am,” Ada did not look her most amiable; “I said not so.”

“No, my dear young person,” the lady pursued, “nor yet that you were conscious of your beauty, though I am impressed with the certainty of mischief done, and conquests won. Mr. Maitland says that you could narrate of many such, were you so minded; and Mr. Mait-

land, my dear, is a perfect oracle—so very talented.”

A light broke in upon Ada's mind ; was Mrs. Maitland really aware of her son's passion, and was she sounding her as to the cause of her rejection ?

“It may be so,” she said ; “there may have been conquests : my heart no more my own—I say not so.”

“I was impressed,” resumed the lady, “was convinced it was so ; some low-born rustic, unable to appreciate—unworthy ought so good.”

“I am content, Madam,” proudly said Ada : “it were not well for the dove to mate with the falcon.”

“The language, too,” said the lady, musingly, “the sentiment ! My dear young person, I am deeply impressed with one broad fact—”

At this moment, however, Mr. Maitland entered the cabin, a nice, amiable-looking man he was too ; his countenance beaming with benevolence and humour, though now there was an expression of sadness there, that clouded its

gayer mood: his coming seemed to quench the lady's questionings.

"See, Mr. Maitland," she said, "I am learning to manufacture the beautiful purse: are they not pretty fingers to teach me?"

Mr. Maitland looked very earnestly at Ada for some moments; he scrutinized her from head to foot, while apparently but noticing the work.

"I hope you are not a stupid scholar, Mrs. M.?" he inquired; "do you find her so, Alice?"

"Mrs. Maitland would soon teach herself," said Alice, disconcerted by their eager gaze.

"I will proceed with the work, good Alice," said the lady, "and will submit it to your inspection when further advanced; perhaps you will withdraw for the present; I observe Mr. Maitland wishes to confer with me."

Alice was glad to retire, for she could not half understand the good woman's drift, or that she herself was quite *impressed* with what she intended to say, though Ada half suspected there

might be some ulterior motive, she wanted the resolution to admit.

It was a relief to find the weary interview at an end. Her mistress was still in her cabin; her cheerful voice did sound so reviving.

"Well, Alice! apt scholar? kept you long time." Aside, ("Prosy, I am sure.) Told you what a talented man, dear Mr. M. was? know she did."

"Yes, Ma'am," said Ada "whether the lady learnt or no, I certainly learnt that fact."

"Always tells all people." Aside, ("Never was such a paragon! slow coach, prosy—unfortunately prosy.")

CHAPTER III.

Thrice did the wizard knock—one blow,
As if he sought at first to know
The quested gem were there,—again,
So smilingly, as if he'd fain
His end have won by gentle craft,—
And then, as if he thought to waft
On fairy breath, his eager pray'r,—
And yet he fail'd—despite his care.

THE day but one afterwards, a singular coincidence happened to Ada, especially as it was altogether unpreconcerted.

When she went to assist Miss James, who was an early riser, and generally detained her in conversation until Mrs. Burdett required her assistance, the young lady began, very unexpectedly to Ada, who never dreamt of any

betrayal of the secret, to enlighten her on the subject of her fancies.

"I tell you what, Alice, if you are not a very dolt, you may get a good husband, and be a lady too ; do you know that ?"

"Indeed !" said Ada, and surprised she really was.

"Yes, indeed ! my girl ; but you know it well enough ; spite your demure look, Alice, you know young Maitland is dying for the love of you."

"You are quizzing me, Ma'am."

"You know it, Alice, you know it ; don't let your mouth say no, when your conscious eyes so plainly say yes. You know it's so, and I know it too."

"Gracious, Miss James !" exclaimed Ada, some little off her guard, "*how* can you have known it ?"

"Never mind, Alice, *how* ; I *do*, and knowing it, and some little more too—to wit, that Alice's heart and his don't beat quite in unison—understand me, Alice ? yes, I'll trust you, you understand—and admit that truth too : nay, don't

shake your head, girl; one of your cold looks, when he passes you by, would give the lie to a thousand denials."

"Then it is needless to deny," calmly said Ada.

"Still more I fancy, girl—for I have been very busy in your affairs—*too* busy you may say; I fancy your heart is otherwise *impressed*, as poor Mrs. Maitland would say. Not tell me, eh? well we'll assume it then; and now, Alice, let me be a friend to you—I can be a very true one, though rather giddy, as you may see, and you want a real friend."

"You are very kind, Miss James," said Ada, earnestly, "very kind; but I do not see how you can aid me, or how I want advice."

"This way, Alice: suppose there is already some gentle swain—let us assume that too—a poor man, of low rank perhaps, your future lot subject to all the troubles and trials of such a lot—again shake your head! I'll allow you love him—that he loves you, though how little

can he appreciate you, Alice—do keep that head still!—I don't mean to flatter, Alice, indeed I don't; but you are far too pretty, and far too intellectual for such a lot, and a man of that kind may neglect a jewel he could not estimate, and leave you in peril for his drunken companions. I do not draw a fancied picture, Alice."

"It does not apply to me, lady," Ada spoke coldly; "if ever I marry, there shall be devoted love to bar a chance like that."

"Ah! but will your devoted love not change? not change to hate, when poverty comes, and disappointment, and want? you look incredulous, Alice; thousands have done so before you, and made shipwreck of their happiness. I had a sister, thought as you do—an only, dearly-loved sister—she fell in love, deeply, madly, with a man, her equal in rank, but a poor, unstriving one. My papa was then himself but a briefless barrister, and urged his daughter every way that he could, to root the fancy out, and not commit herself to so doubtful a lot; but my sister, poor thing! would not listen—thought

love dearer, better than existence itself, and would, and did marry for love ; and how did it answer, think you ?”

“Of course they could but be happy in themselves,” said Ada, “in spite of fortune.”

“Ha ! no doubt, fond girl, you think so—trust to man’s love ? I pity every woman that does, and wish they but knew my poor sister’s lot. Her husband loved her, indeed, truly at first—truly for a *man* ! but, in spite of my father’s often assurances to the contrary, he still believed my sister would not be altogether portionless ; and when he found it was in truth so, he became a moody, disappointed man, quarrelled with us all, quarrelled with his wife, neglected her, at length deserted her, and she poor thing ! still loving him—just like a woman !—still devoted in her love, soon died of a broken heart.”

“It is a sad tale, Ma’am,” Ada said, thoughtfully ; “but I would hope, for humanity’s sake, it is a rare one.”

“I know not,” the young lady continued,

checking the momentary depression, "nor shall *I* ever be one to test the question; no earthly consideration shall ever let me wreck my happiness on a rock like that. But I do not tell the tale, Alice, merely to interest your sympathies—God knows, though years have passed, it is a painful one!—but to open your eyes to the real truth. You have evidently the opportunity of marrying well, and since, of need, some people must marry, and you are no foreswearer of the peril, I would have you think seriously of the matter, and not let any silly fancy bar so good a chance."

"Thank you, Miss James," Ada smiled; "but I must, despite your warning, maintain my own views on that subject."

"You would love George Maitland, Alice, you could not help it, he is so amiable—all say that; and love, they say, comes as often after marriage, as before."

"I do not wish to argue the question," said Ada, gravely.

"He is very rich, Alice; you would be a lady

—a real lady, too—for I must say, without flattery, girl, that nature has intended you for such.”

“I know, at least, that nature has made me honest,” said Ada, decidedly; “has made me incapable of trifling with the affections of an honest man, be he however lowly.” She gave not opportunity to Miss James to say more, merely adding: “I thank you, notwithstanding, for the intention,” and quitted the cabin.

From her, she went to her mistress, who had already called for her.

“I want to speak to you, Alice,” Mrs. Burdett scarcely waited till the door was closed: “I am uneasy about you, child; you know our compact?” Aside, (“Give my ears to know—kept mum for all that.) Now have I not kept it well, Alice?”

“You have, dear Madam, very well!” Alice looked doubtfully, “and, I hope, still mean to keep it well.”

“Umph!” said the good lady; it was evident enough that no intention was further from her

thoughts; "I am uneasy about you, child—have been thinking whether I am doing my duty to you." Aside, ("Young person—old eyes see clearer than young ones.) You are young, Alice, and have been, as it were, thrown strangely on my care, and I feel a kind of moral responsibility for your welfare." Aside, ("Never forgive myself—never.")

"Indeed, dear lady, I know, I feel I am deeply indebted to you for very much kindness; do not spoil it now."

"Spoil, spoil!" The asides began this time. ("Cure for welfare—spoiling! oh, these young heads!) You see, Alice, circumstances may change compacts, and, though I never dreamt of breaking ours, I have such a strange sense of its being my duty to ask one or two questions from you, that—that—in fact, my dear child, you must not say me nay."

"But what are the questions, Ma'am? much would depend upon their nature."

"True, Alice, true; I have made up my mind quite, that your actual condition is very

different from your assumed one." Aside, ("Natively elegant—speech—look—motion.") Am I right, Alice?"

"I cannot answer you, dear lady; I admit all your kindness, but I will not suffer a chance to mar my plans, that I can avoid."

"Put me a case, my child, and I press it not more." Aside, ("Very firm—would not have believed it.")

"I may be traced, Ma'am; I am not yet safe: letters might be sent by the Overland Mail, and my kind benefactress might be prejudiced—be placed in some painful position; and I have made a vow that I will be free to act, so far as I can protect my freedom."

"I say not another word," Mrs. Burdett looked thoughtful; "not on that point, at least, Alice." Aside, ("Must know, though—cannot rest—fidgets.") But will ask you another question. I fancy that some love affair is leading you on in this wild enterprize: may I know if I am right there? Aside, ("Of course I am—sure of that.")

"What if it should be so, Ma'am?"

"I would know, Alice, that the object of it is really worthy of you—that you are not throwing yourself away; and if it should be so, or I were mistaken altogether in my judgment, I would tell you something might surprise—would of necessity interest you." Aside, ("She little knows—and yet—")

"Thus far I will admit," and Ada deeply blushed, "my affections are not my own, that my heart has been given to one, of whose love any woman would be proud."

The asides were busy, very musing, ("Quite prepared for that—enthusiastic—unchangeable—all that sort of thing—and, notwithstanding, wrong.) But, Alice," she asked, "just one more question: of what nature are the circumstances that make you a wanderer thus? Not one hint? Is his rank beneath yours? Poor, perhaps? May not know." Again aside, ("Pity, pity!—throwing herself away—might do so well.")

"Do not think me ungrateful to your kindness, dear lady," said Ada, earnestly; "but I know what you would say, and could not listen to it."

" Know ! really know ! — after all, really know—well, if ever !" Aside, (" And Edith James is right ; oh, stupid, stupid !—everywhere stupid !) Really know about George Maitland, and all that ?"

" To my regret, I do, dear Madam ; regret for *his* sake, and pity—I may never give him more."

" I am sorry for it, Alice, very sorry." Aside, (" As well move a mountain—run a ship up a cataract—of all unmanageable things in the world a girl in love. Well, well.")

" May the subject end, dear Madam ?" Ada asked.

" Yes," said Mrs. Burdett, thoughtfully.

This was the first coincidence.

As Ada quitted the cabin a few minutes afterwards, she heard Mrs. Maitland call for her.

" Come in, Alice," she replied to her tap. " Sit by me, my child ; I desire to converse quietly with you."

Ada did as she was requested ; hoped, as she brought the chair, that the crochet came on well.

"We will not advert to that inconsiderable subject now, Alice," the good lady said it with more earnestness than her usually placid manner; "I wish to confer with you, my child, on a matter which both Mr. Maitland and myself have very deeply at heart." The lady sighed, and there was a tear trembling in her eye, to say it was no unfelt sigh. "I apprehend, indeed, my dear child, that a consciousness already suggests to you the purport of my words. My son George—" the mother's voice faltered.

"I grieve much," said Ada; no one that saw her manner could doubt the sincerity of her regret; "grieve very much for Mr. George's unfortunate impression; have in vain pointed out to him the unworthiness of its object."

"Say not unworthy, my dear child," the good lady pursued. "We all admit that natural gifts and excellence attach a worthiness to the object beyond the fortuitive accident of birth. Both Mr. Maitland and myself—and did you know Mr. Maitland's judgment—but indeed he is so talented every way, you would depend with confidence thereon—we have both accorded our

full approbation of our son's attachment, and are prepared to receive you gladly, affectionately, as our daughter."

"But, my good Madam, you quite misconstrue my meaning. I cannot take advantage of your kind intentions: I cannot be your daughter."

"Not be our daughter, Alice!" the good lady's perceptions never seemed to have arrived at such a possibility. "I apprehend there is some misunderstanding; I mean, my dear, that we freely give our consent to his marrying you."

"But, Mrs. Maitland," Ada restrained not her surprise, "I cannot marry him."

Mrs. Maitland gazed fixedly at Ada. Whether it was that she would not hear her, or was so overpowered with astonishment that any one could really think of refusing her son George, that she knew not what she said: and in her bewilderment went on saying what had been in her previous mind to say, assuming all had been as she intended it; she continued in her own quiet way:

"And, let me tell you, Alice, that our son

George is no common person ; though he is my son, I must be permitted to declare his worth. A better son, or more affectionate, parents never had ; and talented !—I do not apprehend that any one can excel him there, except, indeed, his father ; but then Mr. Maitland, my dear, is so extremely talented ;” she paused, looked earnestly, doubtfully, fearfully, at Ada, and burst into tears.

Ada was greatly troubled. She knew not what to say, or what to do.

The poor lady’s paroxysm continued for some minutes, violent for one of her placid temperament ; at length she spoke :

“ My poor, dear boy ! it will be the death of him ; his soul is knit in you, Alice ; he will not listen to consolation, but will abandon himself to distraction ! Ah ! why did we select this evil-omened ship ? My poor, poor boy !”

“ Do not give way, dear lady, to such unfounded fears,” Ada constrained herself to say ; “ Mr. George will soon think better of the matter, and transfer his admiration to some more suitable object.”

"Never, Alice, never," the mother said, and trembled. "I see it now; George said it was so; your heart is already pledged, and there is no hope for my poor George, and his enthusiastic mind will submerge beneath the blow. We have wrung the secret from him by degrees; have adduced every argument to mitigate his passion, but in vain. Such talent, too!—but he may well be so, and his father such a very talented person."

"A few weeks now, Mrs. Maitland, will separate us," said Ada; "and when Mr. George returns to active employment, he will, no doubt, soon cease to think of me."

"I should be most thankful to think so, Alice; but my heart is heavy, child. Oh, for a word of consolation, such as dear Mrs. Burdett might give me!"

"Shall I send her to you, dear Madam?"

"Kindly, do."

And Ada retired from the cabin with a heart almost as sad as that she left behind.

George Maitland's passion for her was indeed every way unfortunate; unfortunate to himself,

as fretting the very life out of him, without the power to get away from the fire that was scorching him; unfortunate to Ada, not only in its present annoyance, but as attaching so much observation to her, and inconvenient notoriety. She felt, however, she had taken every precaution to prevent the mischief; that not, even at the very onset, had the pleasure of being admired—that universal weakness of womankind! led on her vanity to any smallest demonstration of content.

And she did all, indeed, that circumstances left her to do. She kept herself still more secluded, debarred herself from every possible rencontre with the object of her disquiet, and most devoutly prayed for all prosperous breezes to shorten the period of her discomfort.

But, alas! the winds and the waves care little for human sympathies. Many a fond link have they severed, and done despite to the heart's dearest, most treasured wishes.

The winds seemed to have hid themselves in the farthest West, and if a mere faint breath appeared, it was but an idle chuckle to mock her

anxiety. The waves, too, fell sluggishly asleep, and their heaving breasts scarce seemed to move, so deep, so still their slumber, as if they would yet dream on, while human hopes lay impatient on them, tossed and rocked in fevered restlessness.

A fortnight's calm had caught them on the burning meridian, when now within a day or two's sail from Ceylon, according to Captain Severin's calculations, and infinitely to his annoyance. He said he actually could trace the wind in the horizon, as it were, shirking the 'Triton's' course. And, oh! the weary tediousness, the hope-deferred lassitude, the sickening monotony of these heavy, dreary, parching days!

At last, it was about two bells one morning, the officer on watch called out, "Keep a good look-out—stiff breeze to the northward!"—and there, surely enough, in the distant horizon, was the green sea seen darkening, as the wind walked onward.

And a stiff breeze it was, too, and soon woke the waves from their lethargy. No idle chuckling

now ; the ship itself partook of the fevered restlessness it before but held ; for the gale was contrary, and it was a battle with it, to keep, as well as possible, in their course ; so that it took a week to make the two days' sail to the Ceylon coast, so buffeted had they been and tossed.

And great was the delight of all, when the gigantic ghauts of the spicy land appeared before them, raising their stupendous heads, as if to welcome the weary travellers to the Eastern World.

Great was the interest on board to watch the land, especially to those so far strangers to its marvels ; and, as the vessel neared the coast to catch the favouring breeze, great the eagerness to scent the "spicy breezes" that blew from off the land, and note each feature of its rocky boundary ; the bold, high cliffs, standing out so prominently into the sea.

A few days' sail had brought them well on the Malabar coast, and all was excitement and expectation. Within a week, their voyage would be ended.

One heart, at least, beat loudly as that week went on, and each day brought them nearer to their destination ; sometimes with an almost sickening feel, that seemed strangely to mock its fond anticipations.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Wing the arrow’s flight anew,
Swifter than the wind e’er blew;
Speed the eagle through the sky,
Bid him strike more eagerly;
Yet how tame that speed seems still
To the yearnings of my will.”

It was after a weary night, made almost sleepless by the sultry heat and her own fevered thoughts, that Ada, some few mornings afterwards, had left her cabin with the first peep of dawn, to breathe the pure, fresh air, and try to soothe her restlessness.

The brief twilight had barely come, when she appeared on the poop, and there was that dim,

uncertain light, which showed but indistinctly the features of the mighty rocks before her.

The vessel was tacking to the land, and was now almost close below the frowning ghauts, that seemed to rise into the farthest heaven, and gave a dark solemnity round its base, to which the night was tame.

The brief twilight came on: the individual features of the rocky shore appeared, and the wild luxuriance of vegetation struck the eye at once with its strange and novel forms; the widely-spreading tamarind, the towering teak, the tufted cocoa-nut and date, gave that peculiar character to the country, so unlike all in the olden world; and, amid this teeming exuberance, appeared wide, wide districts, where the unquiet hand of man ne'er seemed to have meddled.

Ada stood gazing in mute surprise. But the light increased; the mighty tops of the giant ghauts, with their everlasting forests, became fringed with the first blush of day, showing, like a crested light, above the lowering darkness of their vast precipitous sides.

The sun was rising quickly now, and threw a horizontal blaze of fire across the sky, hanging o'er the dispersed shadows of the hills with, as it were, a furnace-heaven ; while their wooded summits glistening in his rays, as if besprinkled with the brightest diamonds, their jutting peaks rising here and there in wild fantastic shapes, and ever immense, gave a perfect majesty to the scene, it is idle to attempt to describe.

But the ship had tacked, and soon stood forth the risen sun in all his threatening virulence, showing objects now distinctly, to the far distance ; where long before the vessel's course was visible a large extensive town or settlement, the first that Ada yet had seen.

The officer on watch passed on the poop to give the steersman orders. Ada asked, tremblingly, what place they saw ; it could not be their destination.

" No, no," said Mr. Evans ; " three days' sail yet. That is Tellicherry : we shall get some fish there, Miss ; some fresh provisions too, and, no doubt, some English news by the Overland."

How Ada's heart beat !

Mr. Evans had scarcely passed away, when Ada, to her great surprise, observed some one rise from the deck, near the helmsman, where he had been lying, look round for a moment, and then advance to where she was.

A first glance had discovered that it was George Maitland, but she could not retreat.

"You are an early riser," he said, in a melancholy tone: "my restless spirit has been wandering in the darkness, where alone I may find solitude in this busy house. I had lain me down to dream of beautiful and impossible things, and knew not you were there."

"I regret the mischance," said Ada.

"Nay, nay," he resumed, "I am glad, little as I thought of it: it will do me good to talk to you, Alice; indeed, I had meant to have asked it as a favour—not to talk to you on one vain topic, I fear has already been a source of much disquiet to you. I have thought on it indeed—have reasoned, brooded over it, till my brain has been almost mad at times: but the bitterest sting has passed, and —" he paused to check a sigh—"if it is really for your good, Alice, I

submit : the very love I bear you, would have you happy, even though the penalty be my own wretchedness."

"It is most generous," said Ada, with surprise ; "a generosity of which I am as unworthy, as it is noble in you."

"Surely, Alice," he continued, in the same calm, sad voice, "if I could have seen a chance, faint as the first pale streak of the coming sun, remote as his far abiding-place, I had never yielded the fond hope, one day to have called you mine ; but, since this may not be, I would still think of you as some bright dream of parted bliss, too exquisite for my sad lot ; nor think less kindly, because you have no longer a heart to give."

"Your sentiments, Mr. Maitland, oppress, overpower me : disappointed hopes rarely speak a language such as this."

"Rarely perhaps have the hopes themselves been based on ought so pure—may I say, so unselfish ? Yes, Alice, had it been my lot to have won your love, it would have been my pride, my soul's devotion to have made you happy ; and

now, that I may no longer hope, still may I love, when love asks no more privilege than to be remembered—claims no more than to be esteemed.”

“That, at least, I may do,” said Ada, with emotion, “must ever esteem, where all is so estimable.”

George Maitland sighed to think that admitted worth might win but its acknowledgment.

“From that esteem, Alice,” he resumed, “I would ask a boon, such as joy may yield to sometimes glimmer on the gloomy path of sorrow. A few brief hours will now part us for a long, uncertain period—it may be, for ever; and all I shall have left of one I have so madly loved, will be my own fond reminiscences, and the anxious thought of your unknown welfare. Promise me, Alice, that your welfare shall not always be unknown, that every year, be you where you may, or how you may, you will let my mother hear from you, with the particulars of your condition. Will you, Alice?”

“Most truly, yes.”

"And should you ever want a friend, Alice—now, or at any time—so long as George Maitland is in life to be such a friend, say that you will apply to me, nor scruple to use such means as fortune has placed at my disposal, though it were to the last shilling I possessed."

Ada could not speak—her heart was full; his free, unparalleled generosity deeply affected her, almost to tears.

"Do not deny me, Alice," he said, earnestly; "I will never ask any acknowledgment, but to be sometimes remembered in your thoughts. Say that you promise, Alice?"

"I may never have occasion," Ada said, evasively.

"Still promise," he persisted; "you can have the less repugnance."

"I dare not refuse," and yet Ada hesitated, "though I blush to consent: it is too, too generous, too noble."

"Then, so far, I am content," he said; "for I know that I take with me the esteem of one whose image will soothe, even as it saddens, my

wounded spirit. I ask not more, Alice ; and my heart thanks, blesses you for so much as you have granted me ; nor, dear as it is to me to listen to your voice's music, do I, dare I, ask to hear it more. Farewell, Alice : God grant you blessings and prosperity, and make your path of life to ever smile with happiness : farewell ; I may never speak to you again."

He took her unresisting hand, pressed it for a moment to his lips, and disappeared upon the deck.

Ada felt very sad. Could Howard love with a more generous, a more spiritual love than this ?

Poor Ada ! she had a deal to learn !

From that time, however, during the brief remainder of their voyage, George Maitland never sought to speak to Ada more. He seemed to put a strong constraint upon himself, not even to gaze on her, as it had been his wont ; had evidently tutored his mind to some better fortitude, that promised to cast aside its previous despondency.

Meanwhile the morning had advanced, and

the vessel had passed on, and was now lying-to, close before Tellicherry; and the boats were coming from the shore with all manner of good things; and no sooner reached the ship, than up its side came clambering, like so many monkeys, various natives—native enough, goodness knows! with the smallest possible regard to the decencies of life, in the scanty bit of rag about their naked loins; and after them, came baskets filled with fish and fruits, most exquisite to the eyes and palates of the passengers; some of whom, indeed, were perfectly horrified to see the very *natural* appearance of the purveyors themselves.

“Good gracious!” said Ada, as, on beholding them, she rushed to her cabin.

“What is to be done, Alice?” inquired Miss James, who saw her by the way.

Ada briefly told her.

“Oh! is that all?” quietly said Edith; “you’ll see plenty of those kind of creatures presently.”

In addition to the eatables, they had brought

an English newspaper, of a date quite two months after their sailing from Portsmouth, as also, two or three country papers of the day; each, and all of which afforded infinite amusement and interest, as well as conversation on board, for the remainder of their voyage.

In the latter, Ada saw an announcement amongst the military news, which greatly surprised, and alarmed her; in giving the stations of the different regiments, the —th Foot were stated to be at Bellary. She knew scarcely enough of the map of India to be aware where Bellary was, but at least knew it was not near Bombay; and oh! how her spirit fainted within her at the possibility of Howard's being so soon ordered into the interior—at the thought of further trial, continued suspense.

She determined to seek further information, even at a penalty of betraying her secret. Her first essay was to speak to her kind mistress, but the nervousness which oppressed her as she attempted it, and her repugnance to place Mrs. Burdett, after all her kindness, in any possible

position of difficulty, arrested her purpose; and she determined to apply to Edith James, whose frank and open manners made the inquiry less formidable. She asked her, therefore, with all the indifference she could assume, if she knew where Bellary was.

"Oh yes! it is up the country from Madras, a large military station, and a pretty place too. I know it well, it is in papa's circuit. Any friend there, Alice?"

There was a slight archness in her manner, that did not put Ada more at ease.

"Not exactly," she replied, in a somewhat dubious tone.

"Because, if there should," she continued, "I shall be glad to take any message for you—you understand? We shall go the circuit instantly that we get to Madras."

"And would that be the route to it?" asked Ada, in alarm.

"Oh no! you *may* go from Bombay, but it is a much farther distance. The troops from Bombay march across the country to it. Are you

thinking of going, Alice?—some soldier laddie—eh?”

“Nonsense, Miss James! how can you talk so?”

“Because, if it were so, Alice, I perhaps might get you a convoy, that is all. I see the —th Foot are stationed there; and a detachment of the regiment passed the Cape a short time before the ‘Triton’ arrived, and no doubt will soon be ordered to head-quarters.”

It was perfect salvation to Ada to hear it; Howard was still at Bombay! She did not, however, reply, and Edith went talking on.

“Really going, Alice? upon my word you look very conscious though. I begin to suspect—am very quick, you know, at coming to conclusions.”

“Pray do not anything so foolish, Miss James,” but Ada failed to look the carelessness she desired; “I may surely ask a question for information’s sake.”

“Oh yes, Alice, certainly! only, nonsense apart, if you should want to go on to Bellary,

my dear, and the detachment is still at Bombay, I can put you under the care of my friend, Mrs. Prudhoe, the Major's wife; she stayed with us at the Cape, and is a good sort of soul."

How strange, thought Ada; but she merely said:

"I should indeed be sorry to require your kindness, Miss James, for any such purpose."

"Ah, ah!" said the young lady, smiling, "I am not so sure of that; and, indeed, I don't know whether Mrs. Prudhoe would choose to have the care of such a pretty girl, and all the young officers about her, and very gay ones, some of them, too!"

How Ada longed to ask after one of them!

"She is not going to be tried, Miss James;" there was a slight flavour of the hauteur in her manner.

"Sad set you know, Alice," Edith said, jokingly; "perilous vicinity for such as you, unapproachable as you are on board the 'Triton:' oh! Alice, I know though—I fancy the young

gentlemen will have something else to do, than making love, from what I read in the papers : the northern districts seem in a very troubled state." She laughed. "How would those tiny feet, Alice, like to tramp after the soldier laddie ? thought of that ? not too late to repent, though it is the eleventh hour."

Ada replied not more, but thinking it prudent to be satisfied with the extent of information already obtained, at once withdrew. Howard was still at Bombay, thank Heaven for that !

The next day was a busy one. Captain Severin promised to be at their destination on the morrow ; and such packing up there was, such arranging of luggage, dismantling of cabins—everybody was busy : and then the intense heat to be busy in ! it had been hot enough for the last three weeks, but it seemed now as if the very ship had got heated through, and never cooled : perhaps it was the impatience and expectation of the passengers that made the heat so intolerable.

The next morning early, Malabar Point was

to be seen, standing out in the far distance. When should they be in? Captain Severin said afternoon. The wind, at last, was fair; 'twas time indeed it should be, for it had lost him nearly three weeks from the Cape; they would soon run in now.

They were sadly impatient hours that made up that *soon*, and yet they passed on, much in their usual pace; and there was a great deal of smart dressing, particularly among the younger ladies, in which list the *Graces* classed themselves, outvying all in the magnificence of their landing finery; they had been told what an inspection they would have to pass through on shore: and such talking, and leave-taking, such hopings, and promises, and messages—some tender partings too; Mr. White had been very sweet upon one of the Muses, and they managed to get up quite a scene on the occasion; and Charles, the waiter, was in perfect despair.

But the hours still went on, and the ship pursued her course, and it was not yet four o'clock when the 'Triton' rounded the point,

and the beautiful harbour, crowded with ships, with its white, glistening buildings, its Esplanade, its bold, green rocks, burst on their delighted sight.

CHAPTER V.

That clime which, like its gorgeous butterflies,
Delights to paint all things in deepest dyes.

THE 'Triton' sailed right into the harbour, and anchored about a quarter of a mile from the shore. She had already signalled her arrival, and among the first who boarded her was Mr. McGregor, a square-built man, of a somewhat sombre cast of countenance, who greeted his children very methodically, though affectionately; and who, at their suggestion, insisted on Mrs. Burdett taking up her residence at his house, until she went on to Poonah, where she resided; for there are not any hotels at Bombay, but the good people, and a very hospitable custom it is,

are always glad to receive their friends, or even their shipboard-acquaintance, into their houses, and entertain them, until they have made their more abiding arrangements; and he would be an unlucky wight indeed, who had not some opportunity offered him of a lodgment.

Mr. McGregor had his boat waiting, and at once commenced the transfer of such luggage as they were to take with them. Such a scene of bustle on deck! all anxious to get on shore, all jostling each other; and quantities of native servants coming, with characters in hand, to be hired, from the fat, portly butler, down to the very dog-boy:—"Please, Sir, want cook," "Please, missus, want Dobie, got good character," was heard here, there, and everywhere; and there were a vast quantity of good-byes, and shaking of hands, as each party got into their boat; Mrs. Burdett in particular, who had a very extended range of adieux to get over, and bustled about famously. Even Ada had her *congés* too, for Charles, the waiter, did not lose an opportunity to say a tender word or two,

and Edith James, as she passed by her, said, kindly :

“Mind you come and see me, Alice ; I shall be at the Esplanade for a fortnight at the least.”

But the McGregors, her mistress, and herself, were soon deposited in the boat, and off they rowed.

It was then, and not till then, during that day, that George Maitland was seen upon the deck : he leant over the ship's side, caught Ada's eye for one single moment, and instantly retired. Ada could not restrain a sigh, though wherefore she did not seek to know. She had been anxiously scrutinizing the comers on board, almost fearing that each one might have been in quest of her, even yet was she full of apprehension of discovery.

But they had soon reached the Apollo Bunder, where they were to land, and where her attention was promptly engaged by the bustle awaiting her there ; and where, from among numbers of carriages, and palanquins, and carts in waiting—

many of them of such extraordinary shapes—some moved by horses, some by bullocks, and some by men, and all looking strange in Ada's eyes, from their odd commixture, Mr. McGregor's phaeton promptly drew up, into which he placed the ladies, himself driving, the two maids following in a palanquin carriage. This latter amused Ada exceedingly; a *vis-à-vis*, in fact, very long, and very low, drawn by bullocks, whose ungainly and uneven paces were very unlike any other motion to which, so far, her experience had been subjected; but they went well enough, and quickly too, and Ada soon forgot their eccentricities in her surprise at the many strange things she saw by the way.

The airy appearance of the houses, full of windows and doors, and all cased round by verandahs; the native mud bazaars, so rude and uncouth in their shapes, and daubed over with all kinds of glaring colours; with the women sitting in the open verandahs, their broad brooms in hand, whisking off from their food-wares the flies, whose numbers seemed to contend with them for ownership; the native women in the

streets carrying water, in their graceful dress, their scanty little jackets and short garments exhibiting to advantage their beautiful limbs and elegant motion, the very poorest of them covered with jewels—the wonted mode, indeed, in which they keep what little property they have—the women, too, working with the men, and undertaking all kinds of labour; the black, naked coolies running here and there to snatch at any little employment that would bring them but an *anna*. Contrasting with these, and mixed up pell mell with them, the smart young officers cantering about, the carriages of every shape and grade, from the pompous hackery, with its gaudy, umbrella-like top, and no less pompous occupant, in his turban and jewels, his bullocks covered with bells making more noise than the jumbling vehicle itself, down to the meagre bullock cart, at hire, for a merest trifle. Here and there, too, some other great native, on his sumptuously caparisoned horse, with arched neck and long, flowing tail sweeping the ground, and feeling as important as his rider; and the popish priests, in their long, black gowns, and long

beards ; and the civilians, of almost every rank, in their light, white jackets ; and the umbrellas ; and the universal tomtoms, incessantly going ; and above all, in Ada's mind, the numbers of palanquins, each with its eight bearers, running here, there, and everywhere : everything, indeed, so unlike dear old England ; everything, even did not the burning sun of itself tell the fact, too sensibly to be mistaken, reminding the stranger that she was in the Indian land.

Mr. McGregor's permanent residence was at Mazagaum, but he was at present living at his Bungalow, on the Esplanade, and there did Ada promptly find herself. It was a light summer-house, a single story high, near to the shore, constructed with every regard to coolness, situated in a large and well-planted compound, with a garden teeming with flowers, but most of them so different in shape, and colour, and scent, from anything Ada had before seen ; and the beautiful butterflies, some so immense in size, so splendid in colour ; and the noisy parrots, chattering, screaming, and flying about everywhere, and the

busy monkeys, skipping and grinning in all manner of antics. All was strange. There were several tents about the Bungalow, some for the guests, whom the host could not provide for in the house, some for the servants.

Ada, indeed, did little but wonder and exclaim, from the time she first put her foot on the shore, till, throwing herself upon her bed at night, well protected by Maria's experience from the musquito plague, she slept in perfect elysium.

She was awakened by a horrible dream: she thought she was drifting in a fragile boat on a wild, stormy sea, and there, close behind her, was her father—what a withered old man he looked! rushing through the waves, and gaining on her course; she thought she madly seized the oar, and plied it with all her might, for before her, on the far shore, was Howard seen, watching carelessly on the beach, as if he would not see her peril. Still nearer came her father—his hand was nigh on the boat—she sprang to the bow—was plunging into the sea, when the

jaws of the greedy shark were ready to receive her, and she plainly heard her father call, in the old home tones :

“Ada, darling ! come once more to my arms !”

The fright awoke her ; her pulse was beating violently ; she trembled with agitation ; and still in her ears rang the old home voice—“Ada, darling !”—and her yearning heart answered it with tears.

It was not, indeed, that Ada required to be reminded of her father’s love, of a father’s loss ; it was a subject, often, very often in her mind, and latterly the sense of wrong done to her by the attempted sacrifice of her happiness, had softened in its asperity, and the ancient chord had played fondly to her heart ; while, as her destination drew nearer, and she had thought much and anxiously of the possibility of some agent of his claiming her on her arrival, so many deeply-grown reminiscences came, that her thoughts were often full of the olden times—full of her father’s love.

She dared not ask herself how he had borne

her loss, and the dreadful suspense of her unknown condition: was it possible that the fearful tale by which Sir John Newman had sought to draw her into his toils, was indeed true? She shuddered to think of her father as a lost and lone old man, and no daughter's love to cheer him from his melancholy—no sympathising smile to bid him peace.

Not even that intenser flame, which had become her better life, the day-star of her existence, the which to dwell upon did ever cheer her spirits and uphold her, not even could its brightness entirely eclipse the steady light of the ancient love; and she had determined, immediately on her arrival at her destination, when no farther risk of interference could possibly result therefrom, to write to her father, with an assurance of her continued love, and her sorrow that the imperative circumstances of her position, should have compelled her to the course she had taken.

Her dream, therefore, was rather the result of previous impressions, dressed up in the embodiment of sleep, than as any new thought, or

chance reminder; and she waited but to trace out Howard, and place herself under his appointment, ere she wrote to her father the full particulars of her adventures since their separation, and to implore his forgiveness.

Ada might well shrink from the thought of her father—of a parent whom she had left surrounded by difficulty, abandoned to suspense. Could she have seen him—seen the old man, aged indeed, less by years than by the withering hand of care and grief; could she have seen him weeping for his child, and washing his couch with his tears; to think that any unkind word of his, though forced from him by the moment's anguish, should have driven his darling from his love, and made his declining days one night of anguish; could she have seen this—seen it then, when the ancient chord played so loudly to her heart, with what rapture had she rushed to his embrace, and hid her aching cares upon his bosom!

But she did not know, and a long period elapsed before she became acquainted with her

father's condition, since she had parted from him. Mr. Greville, indeed, had felt, in all its bitterness, his daughter's elopement ; and he felt it even the more acutely, as he was sensible, in his calmer moments, how much his own conduct, his eager, mad desire to save his ancient name from disgrace, and his fortune from ruin, even by the sacrifice of her happiness, had led to the mischief.

So strong, indeed, was his sense of this error, so rejoiced was he to feel that his child was saved from the misery he had sought to doom her to—for he had learnt some little of his intended son-in-law's immoralities, had guessed still more, that her separation from him seemed a very salvation, and he bore it resignedly as the penalty of his unintended fault.

Though it was long ere he could tutor his mind to submit with patience to the anguish of his lot ; deprived of the society of a child he doted on, unknowing where she was, unknown if yet she lived—oh ! if but that he might be assured of her happiness !—it did seem, even to

his deepest condemnation of himself, very hard to be kept in this utter ignorance, and not one word to bid him cheer.

Mr. Greville had entirely failed to gain any trace of Ada in the metropolis. He had found access to Howard's friends, and, learning from them of his having sailed on the day but one after his daughter's flight, had naturally concluded that she had joined him; and he had actually written out to a friend at Bombay to watch the 'Sappho's' arrival. Ada's illness, however, and the consequent delay, had frustrated his plans; and it must be allowed, that, between the time of his friend's advice of his nonsuccess and the after receipt of Ada's letter, he did suffer all the worst torture of suspense and apprehension; but this was yet a thing to be.

Mr. Greville, too, had no small diversion of his thoughts in the compulsory attention to his affairs. He had been obliged to place himself in the hands of his legal advisers, who had detected several features in his position, which he had overlooked to his disadvantage; and though they

would not prevent the temporary suspension of the bank, yet such arrangements were effected, as eventually to save the bulk of his property, and leave him still a rich man, and, what was yet dearer to him, with an unsullied name.

It was found, too, that Sir John Newman had not the power over him that the man expected; that his very eagerness to force him into his terms had overshot its mark, and tainted all their transactions with usury; so that, although no ultimate advantage was taken thereof, he had no present power to force Mr. Greville to extremity.

The wily Baronet had never breathed to any one his infamous attempt on Ada and its goading failure. He had been exposed in an even worse case of profligacy, if such could be, and had been compelled, for a time at least, to absent himself from the country.

All these particulars, however, Ada had yet to learn; and it was a long, long time, ere she did learn them.

For the present, Ada had other thoughts to

engross her. Ever prompt to act, she had already hired a palanquin, when Mrs. Burdett summoned her.

"Well, Alice," said the good lady, "our compact's at an end, I think." Aside, ("Well kept, *I'm* sure—itching fingers, though, and all that.) And I think that you are safely entitled to have back your surety in full tale; it would be as unjust to name a single breach of the terms."

"I shall be glad," Ada said, feelingly, "if the whole sense of my obligation be not marred by one ungracious reflection."

"Never mind the obligation, child. Surely enough, I did feel certain qualms when first we met; but you have been a great comfort to me, Alice, and so we'll consider the obligation mutual." Aside, ("Much attached—sorry to part.")

"Just like your own kind heart," said Ada.

"But, tell me, child, what are your plans? Am I to consider our relation at an end?"
Aside, ("Of course—no doubt—other views.")

As long as I can be of any use, either for protection or advice, all I can say is, command me."

"Thanks, dearest lady, a thousand thanks; nor would I be so ungrateful as to leave you, without acquainting you with the history of her whom you have so kindly befriended, though, for a few hours, I must still reserve my confidence. I am now going to inquire for my friends; and hope very briefly to prove, by living evidence, my full justification."

"Humph! You blush, Alice," said the old lady, significantly. "As I thought—love, eh?" Aside, ("Never far wrong with young girls—red coat, I'll be bound—pity, pity.")

"You shall know all, dear lady, on my return. I will not be long."

"Romance! romance!" ejaculated the old lady, aside, as Ada left the apartment. "Well, well—done the like myself."

Ada was already in her palanquin, and a snug, nicely cushioned lounge it was; barring the swing of the vehicle, and the song of the bearers; but they soon had run over the ground, and

placed her, as she had ordered them, under the verandah of the "Times" newspaper office, where she had resolved to make her first inquiries.

"Could she have a series of the paper for the last few weeks?"

"When did she want them?"

"Then! instantly!—she would wait."

Ada's impatience was far too overpowering for any restraint. She took up one after another, as they were selected, and glanced over the military news in each. She had not to look long, ere she found an announcement of the detachment of the —th Foot, recently arrived from England, having been ordered, nearly three weeks ago, to join the head-quarters at Bellary.

There was a further account of their transit to Panwell, with the officers' names in full; and among them, as Ada's eyes quickly saw, Captain Smythe stood prominently forth.

Poor Ada! a weary heart was hers, fond girl. Again parted! Her spirit sunk within her; she crept back into her palanquin, almost unconscious that she did so; and no sooner had she reached Mr. McGregor's, than rushing to Mrs. Burdett's

room, she hid her face upon her lap, and burst into a flood of tears.

"What now, Alice?" exclaimed the good lady, not slightly surprised at her distress. "Good heavens! what ails you, child?" Aside, ("Ah! lover false—disconsolate, poor dove!")

And Ada, with a bursting heart, mid sobs and tears, told her her history—her disappointment.

"Poor child!" said Mrs. Burdett, as she finished her narrative, "indeed, I pity you; indeed, feel for you most truly." Aside, ("Sad thing—fond heart—enough to break it outright—a thousand miles!")

"And what am I to do?" said poor Ada; "I feel as if my heart would break. Oh! I had so thought to have rested my weary head at length in peace!"

"Cheer up, dear child," Mrs. Burdett affectionately entreated; "I will inquire what can be done. You might go on with me to Poonah; but how to send you forward, unless some chance party should be going—"

"There must be no *chance*," said Ada, im-

ploringly: "do find some instant way to send me on."

"You could not go that route alone, Alice. The jungles are most unsafe; the Thugs throng the country. I would not go for a thousand lovers, were I young enough to care for them; and I cannot think of your attempting such a thing." Aside, ("Horrid wretches—cut your throat when you don't know it: hungry tigers, too—on you in no time.) Leave the matter to me, Alice, and I will see what can be done."

"But, oh! be quick, dear Mrs. Burdett; I shall die if I am kept back."

"Not quite so bad, I hope, Alice, as that," said Mrs. Burdett, smiling at her earnestness. "Things in this hot land do not get on so rapidly as in merry old England. Time itself seems to lag under this burning sun." Aside, ("Knock you down—stroke of sun—brain fever—cholera morbus.) Do you go to your room, Alice, and compose yourself: of course, now, you are my guest." Aside, ("Knew it all the while—seldom wrong—young men's attention

indeed.) I will come to you, when I have made sufficient inquiries."

Ada slowly withdrew, though with little hope of any lightening of her grief—of any mitigation to her anxiety ; but, after a while, she felt more composed, more reconciled. The first shock had passed by, and her spirits revived.

Good Mrs. Burdett was sure to ferret out some mode of accomplishing her wishes—oh ! that she would return.

And return she did, but it was hours afterwards ; how anxiously Ada looked for the result ere it was spoken ! She had made every inquiry in her power ; she had heard of one plan, the only plan she *could* hear of, but it was a very good one.

Mr. James would take charge of her all the way to Bellary. Nothing could be more fortunate. He was obliged to be there in little better than a month, and could insure her safety and comfort. It was the very thing ; very fortunate indeed—was so glad—great satisfaction—very.

Another month! Poor Ada! .

But there was no remedy. Mrs. Burdett so entirely set her face against the direct route, that Ada, with all her anxiety, could not think of attempting it; nor indeed did the apparent gain of a few days, offer any sufficient inducement for herself to insist on it.

She was obliged, therefore, to submit; and, tutoring her mind, as well as she could, to the delay, she attempted such diversion of her disappointment as was within her reach.

She wrote to Howard, telling him of her arrival at Bombay; of her proposed route to Bellary; her hope to be near him within the specified time; of her warm heart's love—her unchangeable constancy.

She also wrote to her father, telling him of her safety, her plans and prospects; assuring him, that, although her hope of earthly happiness had forced on her flight, still did his child love him fondly as ever, and in that love, hoped to find extenuation of her fault, if fault it really was.

The Overland Mail was to be dispatched within two days, so that little delay would occur there. Howard's letter would go at once.

She saw Edith James the day following. She had heard many of the particulars of Ada's communication to Mrs. Burdett, and sought her to offer, in her own kind-hearted way, the assurance what pleasure it would be to have Ada as a companion for so long a time.

"But, my dear Alice—I suppose I must still call you Alice—pray tell me who the *caro amico* is? I am dying to know—perfectly ravenous."

"He was on board the 'Sappho,'" Ada blushed to very scarlet.

"On board the 'Sappho!'" Edith exclaimed in unrestrained surprise. "Which? which? Surely not—" she paused.

"Not whom?" Ada asked, in quick alarm; "why do you hesitate? Pray tell me?"

"I fancy it is discreet to keep my own counsel sometimes," Edith said, with a smile, "though I am not *famed* for anything of the kind; but, come, let me know, I positively cannot abide."

"Mr. Smythe." Perhaps Ada had never uttered the name since she left Grosvenor Place, and she said it very sheepishly now.

"Howard Smythe!" said Edith, totally unable to conceal her astonishment; "is it possible?" and she looked so earnestly at her, that Ada was perplexed.

"Was he—though surely not?" Ada asked, eagerly.

"I know Howard well," Edith said, "and a very handsome, agreeable man he is, Alice; but a very flirt, my girl."

"*May* have been," Ada said, in all the trustfulness of her love, "not so now—great spirits always."

"Poor Alice!" Edith looked so pityingly; "and really has Howard won *your* heart, too?"

"We are engaged," Ada said; "would have been married ere this, but for peculiar circumstances."

"What a naughty man!" Edith quickly added, "not to tell me. I saw him often at the

Cape; relation of Mrs. Prudhoe's; but what a man!"

"Now, what do you mean, Miss James?" Ada quickly demanded. "A lover's ears are very sensitive: there is *something* to be told?"

"No," said Edith, evasively; "but to think of Howard Smythe's being an *affiancé*—the very last person in the whole world!"

"You mean something, Miss James."

"Edith, if you please," said the young lady.

"Well, then, Edith," Ada spoke the name with emphasis, "tell me what you mean?"

"Now, why should you ask, Alice, or I be so unwise to tell? Suppose he has been making love to me, for instance?"

"Nonsense!" Ada's lip curled; Howard make love to Edith James, save indeed for amusement; "I should not credit it."

"And yet he did, forsooth," the young lady was slightly piqued, despite her professed contempt for the sex, "and very warm love, too."

"He meant it not," Ada lightly said; "it was but pastime."

"In truth, Alice," Edith spoke frankly, "it were quite as well you thought so. Why should I embitter your thoughts with one shadow of a doubt?"

"Doubt, Edith?" Ada proudly asked; "doubt, where Howard Smythe is concerned?"

"Poor Alice!" Edith said, and shook her head; "but let it drop. I would not vex you, dear, by questioning your lover's truth; but men are all alike—cold and selfish; and if you do not know it now, doubtless you will in time. Good by, dear: I will see you again ere long."

And, patting her on the cheek, she left her to her thoughts.

And, in truth, they were anything but agreeable. What did Edith mean by her half-told hints? Howard make love to her indeed? Nonsense!—and yet there was a painful feeling on her mind, that Ada was afraid to analyze. Was Howard in such spirits, then, that he could seek for pastime—even *wish* it? Would *she* have done so?—*had* she done it? with her

whole heart concentrated in its one object, and all the whole earth as nought besides !

Ah ! fond, trustful woman ! why do you cling to man's affection with such blind tenacity, nor wish to see its hollowness !

CHAPTER VI.

Circumstance,
Unreal god and miscreator term'd,
And yet whose hand is everywhere discern'd;
In each one page of mortal history
Gives blessing here—there curse will give to be.

CIRCUMSTANCES hastened Mr. James's departure from Bombay. The next steam-boat was rather too soon for his requirements, but the succeeding one was too late; and as he was compelled to be at Bellary by a given day, to take up the circuit there, he had no choice but to adopt the former.

So far, Ada was much delighted, particularly as each succeeding account from the north brought fresh tidings of anticipated disturbances and out-

breaks, which seemed to demand strong measures to put down. There was, too, a general expectation of extensive orders for the movement of the troops at the different stations, which might change Howard's quarters before it would be possible for Ada to join him.

The arrangement curtailed Ada's stay at the McGregors; they had shown her every possible kindness, and had done their best to amuse her, though the opportunities were but meagre.

Out of the few incidents that really interested her, was a visit they paid to a neighbouring Nabob, who gave what is called a nautch, where a crowd of visitors were collected to witness the dancing, if dancing it could be called, of nearly forty dancing girls, most of whom were beautiful creatures in shape and features, profusely bedecked with jewels and flowers; their graceful attitudes and movements, and their tinkling feet, being altogether so unlike anything she had ever seen, that Ada, for a time, was greatly amused; although her content was somewhat moderated upon learning of a report that the Nabob had collected the company, comprising most of the principal resi-

dents, the Governor among the number, with a view to some plot or other.

But whether such was really the case, or His Highness, overawed by the body-guard the Governor had brought with him, wanted courage to proceed, the evening passed off without any disturbance; though such of the company, to whom the report had transpired, were not slow to place themselves out of the power of such a doubtful host, especially as such attempts by the native princes are no very rare occurrences, the mere according to them, the state and semblance of royalty, continually keeping alive the desire to grasp at the substance.

Edith James was in a perfect fright on the occasion; and if her father had not been an official, and, as it were, compelled to face it out, she would have secured her exit speedily.

Edith had become much better acquainted with Ada, and their mutual liking promised to produce great advantages to the latter's plans. Indeed, but for Edith's secretly biasing her father, they had still lingered at Bombay, until the second boat: she had, in fact, yielded her

own wishes and enjoyment to serve her friend, knowing Ada's eager desire to avoid delay.

The day of their departure soon came, and a very affectionate parting took place between Ada and her friends. Poor Mrs. Burdett was quite in tears on the occasion ; and the kind-hearted Maria, who had been so rejoiced to find that Ada's lot was such a bright one—to her it seemed so—still claimed to part from her as a friend, lady though she was ; Ada, indeed, did not suffer the grateful feeling she cherished for her to rest in mere verbal acknowledgments.

They had a favourable voyage, and appeared before the Madras coast upon the sixth day ; but, to their great discomfort, the surf, on their arrival, was so high, that it was impossible to land ; and they were obliged to stand out again to sea until the morrow, when it was then judged sufficiently safe to land : and Ada and her party having been lowered into one of the masulas, a kind of boat made of the bark of the cocoa-nut tree, sewn together, with a large turned-up prow, and sides some yards high, wherein they sat, almost as if it were at the bottom of a box,

they were soon rowed through the dangerous surf, splashed enough and frightened too. Indeed, the Catamarins (a kind of raft, peculiar to the coast, standing on which, the natives can push through the surf, be it ever so high, and though oftentimes tumbled off, never fail to regain their footing), which attended the masula boat in which the party were, could not keep near them, but were washed far and wide by the violence of the waves.

It was nearly noon when they landed, and Ada soon became sensible of the great increase of the heat; it was indeed almost the only observation she did make; for, of the place itself, she saw nothing, but from shipboard: promptly deposited in a palanquin as she reached the shore, she was soon placed under the hospitable roof where they were to sojourn; and on the following evening they were on their way to Chittore, where Mr. James's residence was.

Their mode of travelling was this:—A palanquin for each of the party, which consisted of Mr. James and his daughter, Ada, and Edith's

Ayah, with twelve bearers to each palanquin, eight of them bearing at a time; the other four, two of whom carried each a blazing torch to light the way, and keep off the prowling beasts of night; running by the side, and changing with their fellows at about every five miles.

On each palanquin was an imperial, which held a tolerable quantity of luggage, and above them was deposited the needful provender for the way; everything that could be wanted, even to the very water they required to drink: though, as Mr. James was travelling post, their provision, on this occasion, was small.

Thus prepared, and the palanquins well cushioned within—made up, in fact, into a regular couch—the ladies put on their dressing-gowns, and, as if actually going to bed, lay comfortably down.

About sunset their journey commenced; and running on at the rate of nearly eight miles an hour, singing, most of the way, a kind of monotonous chaunt, sometimes varied by a successive calling over of their deities, the bearers,

in about four hours, had brought them thirty miles, merely stopping for half-an-hour, once during their run, for refreshment.

Another set of bearers was waiting for them here, who instantly supplied the place of the first, and off they went again, at the same speed, to about a similar distance ; when another change was ready, that, at about daybreak on the following morn, brought them to their journey's end ; and, as the sun arose, Ada found herself at Mr. James's residence, quite one hundred miles from Madras, and without the slightest fatigue, the swinging motion of the palanquin having so soothed her, that even the novelty of her situation, and the singing of the bearers, which, at times, sounded very like a howl, could not prevent her sleeping the greater portion of the way.

Chittore is a station of no great appearance ; comprising, besides the native huts, which are sufficiently numerous, not more than about half-a-dozen large houses for the residence of the officials of the place ; its situation is very curious, in a valley of rocks, whose large, dis-

jointed masses are piled to an extraordinary height, and so well-fitted one upon the other, as to seem to have been the work of some olden giant's hands, as, indeed, the natives most firmly believe.

Mr. James's residence was a large, old-fashioned house, but very beautifully furnished, with every appliance for comfort in its arrangements; and he was himself all kindness to Ada, all attention to her comfort and wishes.

Here she spent one whole week, before they commenced the journey. There was scarcely any society, and Edith and she amused themselves as well as they could: they were both fond of walking; rose as early as four o'clock in the morning, the only refreshing time for exercise; would climb the rocks, and seek new points of view. Sometimes they rode to a greater distance, but always with two peons by their side, for protection's sake.

Again, in the evening, before sunset and the quick darkness brought out the snakes—oh, what a plague the creatures were! creeping into every corner, everywhere, sometimes into her bed, and

once, the most venomous of them all, a little, beautifully spotted thing, hiding itself in her very slipper !

Nor was this their only drawback ; the wild beasts were somewhat bold, at times. One evening, as Edith was reading to Ada, in the campound, close to the dining-room window, an immense puma leaped over the wall, and passed across the lawn, luckily without seeing them. On another occasion, while driving out, a little pet dog running behind the carriage, a tiger came quietly from the hill-side, and pouncing on the dog, bore it off before their eyes, a proceeding rather uncomfortable to Ada's unwonted experience of such matters.

At another time, Ada was even more frightened by a furious Fakeer, one of the mendicant Musulmen, who had taken up a lodgment in a banyan tree, close by the roadside, and, as she was passing by, rushed out close to her, with a fearful cry, that made her very heart shudder. A disgusting object, indeed, he was to look on ; a tall, almost naked old man, his body painted in a variety of colours, his unshorn hair and

beard hanging wildly round him, and himself mad with fanaticism, his eye sparkling with unearthly brightness. Ada had scarcely power to hurry past; he had long made the spot his abiding-place, living on fruits and nuts, and carefully hoarding all the pice the poor, ignorant natives accorded to his fancied sanctity,

But the week was over, and all was ready for their move. Their arrangements were similar to those of their former journey, only that now a couple of mounted Suwarrees accompanied them, as well for protection in the wilder districts, as to keep the Judge's state. They posted as before, so that their progress was equally rapid. Their first stoppage was at Bangalore, quite one hundred and thirty miles from Chittore, which they accomplished in a single night. Here they took up their lodgment at the travellers' bungalow—a low, thatched house, set apart entirely for the accommodation of travellers, so far as bare walls could afford such, every other requirement being furnished by those who came to it.

Bangalore is the great military station for the

Presidency, and where the Queen's cavalry regiments are usually quartered, on account of its salubrity; and here Mr. James found many friends to call upon, and his daughter many gay officers to call on her, and get into raptures with the beauty of her companion, so that that day, at least, was anything but dull.

But they did not linger there; at night they again went on to Nundidroog, where they halted for the next day. This was a sacred place for monkeys, which literally were in thousands, and most mischievous thousands they were, as they found to their cost; for, chancing to leave open the window of the bungalow, notwithstanding Mr. James's express caution, the creatures cleared off every fragment of eatables almost in no time.

"I told you how it would be," said Mr. James, as they discovered the plunder. "I have been minus a dinner more than once through the thieves; they actually swarm here, as they are never molested."

"Except when some reckless fellow shoots them," reminded his daughter.

“ You mean Fleetwood’s frolic, Edith ? but that was a foolish business. He was out snipe-shooting, Alice, one morning, when a monkey jumped on the bough of a tree, close by where he was and began to chatter at him. Fleetwood knew well enough the religious awe in which they are held, but without a thought, fired and wounded it. No sooner did it fall, than, I may safely say, though he only saw the single one when he fired, thousands came from every direction ; it might have been an Irish wake, such cries, and howls, and lamentations did they make, as they took up their maimed brother and bore him off to the woods : Fleetwood got great ill-will among the people for his frolic, and might perhaps have paid a worse penalty had he stayed amongst them, as they resent any desecration of their religious prejudices.”

“ You must see a good deal into the habits of the people,” said Ada.

“ Indeed I do,” said Mr. James ; “ have often strange and difficult cases before me.”

“ Edith tells me you do all yourself.”

"I said there were no juries as in England," corrected Edith.

"There are not," Mr. James continued, "but every case is much more closely sifted than any jury could do it. In this country, any great offence—murder for instance, is first examined into by no less than four different authorities, before coming to the circuit judge ; and even he cannot capitally condemn, without the sanction of the Sudder or Supreme Court at Madras, so that if a mistake be made, it is not for want of investigation."

"And how often do you hold your courts?"

"Indeed, continually ;—there are three judges to this circuit, and we keep up a kind of cycle of courts : one of the judges is always on circuit, and it comes to each, once or twice a-year : before I get back to Chittore, we shall have journeyed nearly fifteen hundred miles. Even with our present speed, we shall still be two more nights on our route."

"And then, Bellary !" added Edith nodding to her friend.

"Where, I am afraid," said Mr. James, as he

rose to give orders for their progress, "I must be content to lose a dear friend; but I know some one who will not object."

"Papa would fain quiz," Edith said, as he left the room, "but he knows not how."

"I wonder where his daughter learnt the trick," observed Ada, drily.

"I do like a sly hit," said Edith, laughing, "I will admit that; and if I don't make Howard Smythe cry me mercy, when I see him, my name is not Edith."

"He will have a good champion, Edith."

"No doubt, a fond thing like you will skreen the culprit, as far as you can, but I will have my revenge for all that!"

"And are we really only two days' distance from Bellary? surely, surely, there is no further trouble in store for me, Edith?"

"No, dear, that would be hard, indeed. Would you believe it, Alice, I almost envy you your feelings—in spite of my contempt for the whole sex, covet you your delightful anticipation; it must, child, be perfect ecstasy."

"I know not," and Ada sighed, "I know not;

my heart, indeed, almost fails me, as I think of it," she spoke hurriedly; "surely did I not know that Howard loves me better than the life itself, I had not courage to pursue my purpose."

"You deserve to be happy, Alice, and a far better reward than a dozen such Howards could give you."

"Hush! Edith, I cannot hear a word of that."

"He is a flirt, girl! ay, and I'll tell him so to his face before many days are over."

"You mistake him, Edith; he meant it not."

"So much the worse, had it been so—but he meant it well enough: and had I chosen—yes, Alice, had I chosen—do not be cross, but I fancy Alice's chance had been but meagre."

"'Tis an odious thought: would to heaven! I'd never known it."

"You probed it out of me, Ada."

"Perhaps it is as well, Edith, or I had too much idolized him; at first, my mind scorned its very possibility as sacrilege to his better worth; but I know not—the ungracious conviction will

come that Howard does not love, as I would have his love—as I love him.”

“Pooh, pooh ! child, never make so much of such a light thing as man’s affection ; they cannot help it, Alice. Howard mayhap e’en better than the average.”

“Indeed, I do not know, dear Edith, it may be that these too exquisite emotions cannot be indulged but at some penalty ; to the sweetest honey comes a sting, and poison often lurks in the nectar’d bowl.”

“Then wiser they who let the bowl alone, say I ; but cheer thee up, fond child, the time is brief enough now. I mean to announce your coming to the culprit myself. Won’t he be astonished ?”

“I fain would be my own herald, Edith ; but perhaps it were as well, lest the sudden joy—”

“Should overwhelm the lover’s feelings, Alice ? My dear child, pray don’t distress yourself on that score. I’ll answer for it, that the mischief won’t be very dreadful.”

“Oh ! you incorrigible !”

“Oh ! you too credulous !”

The third morning afterwards, Ada was awakened out of a sound nap by hearing the bearers call out "Bellary." She quickly jumped up, and opened the door of her palanquin to get the first peep of a place, that had become associated in her mind, with the very idea of happiness.

It was broad light; the sun was already seen above the horizon, and shone brightly on the huge rocks; had she returned to Chittore? The rocks and the valley were almost the same; but soon, the largeness of the place, and the barracks, as they turned into the town, and the soldiers, all told her that she was, indeed, at Bellary.

They were soon carried to the circuit bungalow, where Ada alighted from her palanquin, pale with excitement, almost fainting with agitation.

"Be composed, dear Alice," said Edith, in her kindest manner; "your excitement alarms me."

"It is impossible," gasped poor Ada; "I feel as if I shall die."

"Well, well, poor girl, cheer up. Let us get dressed. Papa will send word to Howard that he is wanted; we must be ready to greet him."

What magic in the thought!

Ada promptly busied herself; and though trembling and fluttered, so that she had nearly as much as two toilets to go through, she managed, in due time, to present herself in not less than her usual beauty. Had she ever, indeed, a stronger motive to appear to advantage?

"And I am sure," said Edith, as she turned her round for an inspection of the *tout-ensemble*, "that Howard ought to be proud, if ever man was, to have such a lovely creature as this coming so many thousand miles after him; indeed, I'll hate him outright, if he is not."

At that moment her father entered the room where they were; he appeared very grave and ill at ease.

His daughter looked earnestly at him; she saw that something was wrong, but did not dare to ask an explanation.

Ada gazed anxiously from one to the other;

her agitation was sufficiently evident, and there was a pleading anguish in her look, that seemed sufficiently to speak her thoughts.

"I find a great change in Bellary," at length Mr. James spake; "a very great, unlooked-for change."

Ada started; she did not speak; she seemed to gasp for breath.

He kindly took her hand; its fluttering told him how dreadful was her suspense.

"I grieve, my poor, dear girl, to bring no better tidings; but —" he paused.

"For God's sake, tell me all," Ada said, convulsively; "is he—dead?"

"No, no," Mr. James replied, "not so bad as that. The —th Foot have marched from Bellary now a fortnight since."

Ada heard not more; she had fallen senseless on the ground.

CHAPTER VII.

The gallant barque rides proudly on,
Reckless the storms which past had gone ;
The wish'd-for port is gain'd, when, lo !
Some envious fortune lays it low ;
It droops amid the wave.

It was long before Ada recovered from her swoon. For a moment she looked confused ; and then a deep shade of anguish passed over her features, that made the kind hearts grieve who watched by her.

“ She'll do now, my love,” said Mr. James ; and when Ada looked, Edith's tears told plainly how much she had felt for her. Ada took her hand :

"I am better, dear Edith, now," she gently sighed: "do not distress yourself."

"Then be comforted, Alice," and Edith affectionately kissed her; "I cannot bear to see you thus."

Ada shook her head—what comfort was there for her?

"Edith is right," her father said. "Do not, my dear, sweet child, so utterly give way to your disappointment; but let the energy which has sustained you thus far, teach you to meet the disappointment with fortitude."

"When did they go?" Ada feebly asked. It was evident there was but one idea in her mind, that even sympathy spoke in vain.

"Almost three weeks since," Mr. James replied. "Smythe's detachment barely reached Bellary, ere they marched back."

"And what their destination?" Ada's eagerness for the information could not be contradicted. "Dear Mr. James, tell me all."

"They are ordered, my child, by forced marches to Bombay, it is supposed—but mere con-

jecture, mind—to proceed shortly on to Affghanistan: alarming troubles are feared in that country.”

“Is there a possibility of my overtaking them,” Ada asked hurriedly, “at any pains or cost?”

“You would never dream, poor child, of making the effort?”

“Is it possible?” Ada repeated—there was but the one thought—“possible?”

“There certainly would be a chance,” Mr. James replied; “they can only now be reaching Bombay; and, unless the orders were very urgent, a few days would, of necessity, intervene before they would leave, even supposing the —th to be actually designed for that service. But, my dear Alice —”

“How soon could I set off?” Ada continued.

“Can I go by day as well as night?”

“Do not think of it, my child,” Mr. James said; “we will do all in our power to make you happy.”

“And Edith will be delighted to have you,” said his daughter.

"Thank you, thank you," but Ada wavered not; "I may not tarry."

"We will send an express messenger on to Bombay," said Mr. James, musingly, "and apprise Mr. Smythe of your position."

"Cannot I go with the messenger?" Ada eagerly asked.

"Listen to me, Alice," he continued. "If Mr. Smythe be really under marching orders for the scene of disturbance, even if you succeeded in reaching him, it would be impossible for you to accompany him. While with us —"

"Dearest Mr. James," Ada said so earnestly, "God will bless you for your kindness; but my course is fixed; my very reason demands my instant progress."

"Well, well," and he looked greatly disappointed, "if it must be so, I must submit; and truly, Alice, you give me small encouragement."

"Do not say more," Ada spoke impatiently. "How can I go forward?"

"I will see the collector at once, my poor

child, and learn what can be done for you." And Mr. James left the room.

"And will you really go, Alice?" inquired Edith, as her father quitted them; "indeed, Howard is not deserving of such devotion."

"Hush! Edith, hush!"

"Edith will love you better, more truly, unchangeably, than a score of Howards."

"Do not vex me, Edith."

"I would not surely vex you, Alice; but I would have you see the real object you are pursuing."

"I do see it, Edith, and it is glorious!"

"Blind, blind! I tell you, child, 'tis worthless—worthless, at the price it costs. Do not be angry, Alice; but I must and will speak out; and bear my words in mind, for my poor sake. Howard is as utterly undeserving of you, as you are peerless in your worth. You smile, Alice; sadly enough, God knows! think me envious, perhaps—it may be, even jealous; still mark my words, and be sure the time will come, when you

will say, 'After all, Edith was by no means such a fool.'"

"Did an angel tell me so, dear Edith, I would not believe."

"Infatuated! infatuated! and Edith's love a puny rushlight to the sun you worship."

"Oh, say not so, dear, generous girl; your love has been such a joy to me—an oasis, on which my wearied spirit has rested amid the desert loneliness of my wanderings—will be as an anchor of the soul, on which fond memory will hold as to one spot, where true affection has been mine."

"And may I not, my Alice, still urge you by that love to pause, and not cast aside what you acknowledge as a real good for that more doubtful one?"

"Do not suggest a doubt, Edith. Think it, if it must be, but speak it not. Indeed, indeed, I shall want all encouragement to buoy me on."

"Still on, on! And you will go?"

"Most certainly."

"You heard papa say how mere the chance; he would not exaggerate."

"I have but the one thought, Edith. Think me not unkind to your love. Were there almost no chance, I would go."

"I say no more."

And Edith left her to herself and to her own sad thoughts.

Sad, indeed! Oh! could any poor creature's lot be more sad, more wretched? One hour, full of all the joyous anticipations of reunion with him she loved, after such long, and weary, and anxious wanderings; the next, cast back on doubt, and peril, and loneliness!

When sudden darkness comes, it is more dense for its very suddenness; and the mind, untutored for the instant blow, succumbs before the shock, without an effort to withstand it.

In such a state of despair was Ada's mind, when Mr. James, at no distant space, returned.

He had seen the collector. There had been an unusual demand for bearers, in consequence

of the transit of so many parties following their friends on the route; and he scarcely dared to undertake to forward Ada by *post*; but everything should be done to expedite her journey.

"And now, my dear Alice," Mr. James continued, "if you really must proceed on this uncertain chase—well, well! I say no more, though, on my soul! it grieves me to part with you on any such terms, and you in such a state too."

"I am quite well now," Ada faintly said; "shall be better for the exertion."

"To do any good," Mr. James continued, "not a night must be lost, so that, if you are to go, it must be this very evening. I have seen the General, and he calculates that the —th would reach Bombay about yesterday: he has little doubt himself of their being destined for the north, and, as the case is urgent, does not expect they will be delayed there; every hour gained, therefore, brings you more within the pale of possibility."

"I am ready, dear Sir," Ada said, "now, if it might be."

"But indeed, Alice," he continued, very

earnestly, "I cannot bear the thought of your traversing such a district ; it is unsafe, and there are objections—"

"'Twere well I knew them not," interrupted Ada, "except, indeed, to combat them."

"You are right, my sweet girl," he continued, "nor should your noble spirit be daunted needlessly. I see there is no evasion, so will do all I can to provide for contingencies ; you will require an Ayah."

"That I can manage," Edith said, "a sister of my own is now seeking to get on to Bombay."

"So far well," assented her father ; "we must also find you a guide ; I cannot suffer you to attempt such a journey without the best protection that can be found."

"I am quite content, good, kind friends, that everything will be done that warm affection can suggest. Can I ever repay you ?"

"Yes, my dear, easily," Mr. James smiled, "by getting back to us at Chittore, as speedily as possible."

"I would go to Madras, to bring you on," said Edith.

"And always an open door, and an open heart to welcome you," added her father.

What alacrity of kindness! Ada thought, as they quitted her to see after the arrangements.

Mr. James presently reappeared, introducing one of the native peons, a kind of messenger attached to the government officers; he was a broad-shouldered, well-made man, of about five-and-thirty, with finely-cast features, very dark, but had withal a dubious expression of countenance, which, to Ada's mind, though it might perhaps be her own fault, did anything but conciliate.

He was dressed in the usual official habit, and wore his broad blue vest and scarlet turban with the air of a man who prided himself some little on his appearance.

"This is my young lady, Golab," said Mr. James, as he brought him forward.

"Very good, master," said the man, clasping his hands upon his breast, and bowing to the very ground.

"Now, may I depend on you doing your

duty to her, Golab, and protecting her with your very life?"

"Plenty take care, master," the man said, earnestly.

"You know, Golab," continued Mr. James, "that I have ever been a good friend to you and yours, have protected you against strong enemies."

"Very good, master," and another bending down.

"And I wish you to understand," Mr. James went on to say, "that if you do your duty in this instance, you will find I can be even a better friend yet to you."

"Duty will plenty do, Sa," said the man, very earnestly.

"Now listen, Golab : you will implicitly follow this lady's directions in everything she tells you, and never leave her, under any pretext, until she herself discharges you."

"Very good, Sa."

"I will give you a certificate duly authenticated, which you may produce in case of any

need ; it will also procure you a passage round to Madras, when your duty is ended ; then follow on to me, and the reward, which is in my hands, shall be yours."

"Writing give Missie, Sa?"

"Yes certainly, Golab ; and as the writing is, so shall be the reward. Now, I have known you long, Golab, and your wife has lived for years in my family, and I select you for this trust, because I have such confidence in your fidelity."

"Duty will great plenty do, master."

"Then have all ready at sunset, Golab ; our object is to reach Bombay as soon as possible ; keep that in mind, and you will please me well."

"Care plenty, Sa."

"Then to your preparations, Golab."

And the man, with another, and even more lowly obeisance, withdrew.

"I will answer for his truth, dear Alice," Mr. James observed, as he closed the door ; "I know him to be faithful and honest. If my own child were going the route, under similar cir-

cumstances, I would unhesitatingly place her in his care."

"I am perfectly content," said Ada, though her contentment was one of faith. She did not herself discover the evidence of the man's good qualities; but then Ada was so inexperienced.

"To think that you are really leaving us, dear Alice!" Edith said, as her father left them; "so soon, so suddenly, and I, blind fool! had been promising myself the care of you for months to come. Plague take the men, say I! whenever shall we meet again?"

"God only knows!" said Ada, sadly. "I can hardly yet believe this blight is on me."

"Cheer up, dear soul! all will yet be well, and you will be in time to see this graceless—"

"Oh, would God it might be so!"

"I tell you it will," persisted Edith, "I feel confident you will find him at Bombay; and mind, Alice, now pray do rate him well, tell him but half of what I meant to say, and I am content."

"I will not fail, dear Edith," said Ada, sadly ; "indeed I ought to pleasure you when I may, for I owe you much."

"Well, my love, you know the terms of payment :—come back as soon as you can ; don't forget about the open hearts, dearest."

"I never can forget them, nor the love, dear Edith, you have given me ; wherever I may be, or however, believe me, even in the happiest dreams the happiest lot might bring, still will my heart turn to your affection, as to a green spot in the memory of life, and bless the day that made me known to you."

"A plague on these men, say I !" Edith exclaimed ; "but for them, how happy we should have been together ! you will, of course, write to me, dear Alice ; in any case, let me know how you come on ; and do say how Howard looks when you tax him with his Cape doings."

"I have promised," Ada said, and tried to smile—it was but sadly ; "I will not fail."

"I have written a note of introduction for you, to Mrs. Prudhoe ; it may be useful : and let me have something to remind me of you. I have

never seen you write—do not even know your hand-writing—suppose you scribble a few lines in my journal; can you think of anything? I would not vex you.”

“Yes, Edith, I can,” and Ada looked less melancholy; “I meant, indeed, to have done it ere I left you.”

And, sitting up, she took the book, and wrote as follows :

“Though known to you, I feel I'm still unknown,
A stranger to the love I fain would own,
Who love have won, I have no right to claim;
A stranger still, yet loving, lov'd the same.

ADA GREVILLE.”

And, having written it, she returned the journal to Edith. Edith had scarcely glanced over the lines, and seen the signature, than she exclaimed :

“Ada Greville ! and really not Alice Gower ? and must I lose my dear Alice, and think no more of a name I have indeed loved so fondly ? And this man's doing again ! a plague on them ! I shall hardly know my old friend in so new a guise.”

“I wished ere I left you, dear Edith, to betray my real name; I would not such generous love should be met by fraud, or be myself a lie unto you.”

“Well, my sweet friend, or Ada, or Alice, you have ever Edith’s love, and her best, her dearest wishes; only do, do come back, the sooner the better.”

Mr. James returned from his court duties long before the hour for Ada’s setting out, and took infinite pains to see everything supplied that might be needful for her requirements by the way. And having encouraged her by all manner of kind assurances, he placed her in her palanquin ere yet the sun had sunk beneath the horizon, and after many kind adieux, Ada parted from them, and again went forth—as it were, into the wilderness.

Mr. James had given especial instructions to Golab to keep Ada’s palanquin next to his own, and not to allow the bearers to separate their party, as is sometimes the case, to the peril of the laggards behind: in place, therefore, of Ada’s taking the precedence, as would have been the

customary order of the route, her palanquin was placed in the centre, Golab leading the way, the more effectually to comply with his instructions.

But Ada scarcely knew—cared not for arrangements: she had committed herself entirely to her kind friends' provision for her, and was far too much occupied with regrets and anxieties to think of anything else.

She never slept during that night's journey, but lay listening to the hum of the bearers and their occasional cries; was scarcely conscious of their stoppages to change the different posts: and not even when the night was over, and her palanquin was placed in the bungalow, would she rise for refreshment, but lay thinking, brooding, wondering the day through.

The next night's journey passed off in much the same manner; Golab had managed to secure two additional stations beyond Mr. James's computation, of which he was very proud; and no sooner had Ada been placed in her waiting room, and been farther induced to rise, than he took care to tell her.

“Please, Missie, plenty far come; thirty coss

more done come than master give order—very well get on.”

“I am quite satisfied,” Ada said, “quite content, Golab.”

“Very bad next night, please Missie: this country plenty got Thug—plenty got jungle.”

“Well, Golab, I am in your hands; you must take care of me.”

“Very good Missie; I very take care both of Missie and Ayah.”

And that very night his care was called into action: for shortly after midnight, Ada was suddenly disturbed from her brief slumber, by a loud confused noise of voices: her palanquin was put roughly down, and there was a rush of many feet from around her.

Ada instantly opened the door of her palanquin: Golab was already at her side.

“Missie no be afraid; bearers tell jungle got one big elephant, and done run away.”

“And what is to be done, Golab?” asked Ada in no small trepidation.

“Missie be quiet—light more torches—great plenty blaze.”

"Is Ayah there?"

"Yes, Missie; but plenty frightened," said a trembling voice behind her.

"No need afraid," again assured Golab, who at length had lighted up every light they could collect, and dividing the bearers of the other palanquins as well as he could, they slowly moved past the dreaded spot. They saw the huge beast, indeed, pacing about in great rage, with his uplifted trunk tearing the branches from the trees, and roaring in very fury; but he shrunk before the fire, and the cavalcade passed safely on. They were, luckily, only a very short distance from the next station, and the mischief was soon remedied.

At their following day's stoppage, Ada had a much more serious alarm: for on coming to breakfast she perceived a most extraordinary odour about her, and calling for Golab, it was found to proceed from the table off which she was breakfasting.

"Missie, Missie, better come away," he said in great alarm; and calling the keeper of the bungalow, they began to talk loudly to each

other in their native tongue; Golab evidently getting into a very violent rage. "Missie, one gentleman dead of cholera, done put on it, and many days kept."

And he hurried off with the table as quickly as he could, leaving Ada in a perfect horror; the very idea of such a neighbour as cholera is fearful in that hot country, when many a time and oft, has the morning seen the strong man exulting in his strength, whose evening beholds him a putrid corpse, buried from the sight of men.

But it was not a fear of that which shocked Ada so greatly: a strange thought had, at the instant, struck to her mind, that the dead man, was no other than Howard, and a sickening feeling trembled through her, it was in vain to cast off.

She hastily bade Golab learn the dead man's name, or such particulars as the peon could give him: the man knew but little, could neither tell the name, nor rank of the deceased; but he had cut off a button from his coat, and Golab brought it to Ada.

She started as she saw it ; it bore the number of Howard's regiment.

" He is dead !" said Ada to herself in a burst of anguish.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Mysterious fate ! how oft it is thy part,
Most deep to wound, the purer is the heart."

OH, death ! in whatever shape thou comest, thou art terrible ! Terrible to the man in his wealth, when thou knockest at his door, and callest to him—"Come forth, and leave thy gloated gold, hie thee to the charnel-house—ha ! ha ! will thy riches save thee, there ?—away ! away !" Terrible to the man in his health, who boasts his prowess and his strength ; thou dost but point thy bony fingers at him, the stream of life is blighted, he totters, falls : "On to the charnel-house—oh, brave ! more bones, more bones !" Terrible too, to the man in his poverty, who

clings to his rags and his filth, as if they were dainty gear, and shrink from the hand would give him peace. "And thou too, laggard ! come ! away ! away ! there's room in the charnel-house for even such as thee !—more bones ! oh, rare ! more bones !"

As terrible to the feeble and the weak, who the nearer they come, the farther fain would shrink from him ; he bids them hold his staff, tells them it is the stay of life, while he leads them to the charnel-place, and chuckling, says : " More bones ! still more bones !"

But whether to the rich or poor, to the strong or weak, his coming is always most terrible, when he comes suddenly, quenching the full light of life, as it were, in an instant ; terrible to him who is cut off, it may be, in the midst of his iniquities ; terrible to those who are left behind to grieve and lament ; one hour a moving, thinking, loving being—the next, a piece of lifeless clay, from which, the nearest and dearest instinctively shrink.

So, Ada thought, as horror-struck she lay for hours thinking of the terrible agonies of such a

death-bed, as, no doubt, that room had known : perhaps the very couch by which she lay, might have witnessed the closing scene of life's eventful drama. And Howard there had wrestled with the destroyer, without one sympathizing hand to close his eyes ; one smile of love to soothe the anguish of his spirit. Could it be so ? had such a misery indeed fallen on her ? and the star of her hope set for ever in the far unknown ? God help her if it were so. But surely had the hand of death been there, leaving still the mark of his foul fingers on the sense ; and she, cooped up within the tainted atmosphere, for imagination to act over in varied shapes, the sickening tragedy.

She was still brooding on the thought, still trembling, as the bare possibility of Howard's death occurred to her, when suddenly she became aware of a low, creeping noise close by where she lay : she looked in the direction, luckily, without moving. A man of the lowest caste, apparently one of the Pariahs, with no other covering but the usual waistcloth and turban, was crouching on his hands and knees by the window, as if it were, intently listening. She knew that she had

safely bolted the door, and that the bars of the window rendered access thereby impossible, and she almost believed it was but another of the horrid fancies, in which her mind was lost ; when the figure began to move nearer to her and nearer, but so slowly, so stealthily, that, but for a rope he carried in his hand, and which, for an instant, betrayed his movement, her most acute hearing could not have detected his approach.

Ada was fearfully alarmed ; afraid to cry out, lest she might bring on herself some instant outrage, and yet almost unable to lie still for very terror. She believed him to be some robber, and thinking it better to let him take what little his hands could get access to, than subject herself to any personal violence by giving alarm, she forced herself to keep quiet, still maintaining the semblance of sleep.

The man had now crept close to her, and raising himself on his knees, gazed fixedly at her, and, between her half-closed eye-lashes, she could see his searching eye upon her, while, with his hands, he was carefully unfolding the rope he had with him.

What horror struck her, when Ada saw the fatal noose, and knew, at once, that the wretch came not for plunder, that he too surely sought her life, another sacrifice to the idol he worshipped, the blood-loving Bowhanie, whose favour can only be propitiated by human life.

She could not cry out then, for the whole tide of her blood rushed to her heart, and choked her; it was as if she felt the very noose upon her throat, when, that same moment, there was a shout around the bungalow, the sound of running feet; an instant rush near her; and when she looked again, she saw the man pull away the broken bar and spring through the window: Ada breathed more freely.

That same moment was Golab knocking at the door.

"Missie, missie, all safe?" he called out, in great alarm; "bad man Thug! bad man Thug, done come!"

Ada quickly rose from her palanquin, pale with terror, and telling Golab of her danger, showed him how the miscreant had gained

entrance. They found that the bar had been carefully loosened from the outside, so as to be readily removed, though apparently, until strongly tested, as firm as the others. Seeing effectual means taken to prevent a recurrence of the outrage, Ada again lay down, though even still would a cold shudder creep over her, as she thought of her imminent escape. Unfortunately too, she had to continue at the scene of the attempted outrage, it being impossible to procure bearers for that following night; and an anxious night it was for her, although, from the well-known habits of the sect, she was assured that no second attempt would be made, and was farther protected by a regular body-guard under Golab's superintendence.

It was not until the following evening, that the journey could be pursued; when, after a weary, anxious, desolate day, Ada hastened their arrangements, so as to set out at the earliest hour, if possible, to make good the lost time.

The next morning brought her to Poonah, from whence her journey along the now more frequented route was comparatively safe and easy.

Fain had she paused on her way to see kind, good Mrs. Burdett, and let the cool, refreshing breezes of its mountain district invigorate her feverish blood; but in her present mind, she could not bear the idea of seeing any one, or willingly suffer any interruption to the anxious thoughts which so fearfully engrossed her. She, therefore, again went on, ere yet the evening came, that she might reach the Oomar ghaut ere it was dark; a steep ascent it was, the bearers were compelled to turn the palanquins, and almost hoist them up step by step; Ada seemed to stand nearly upright, so precipitous was the path. The summit, however, gained, such a glorious scene burst on her astonished sight, she could but gaze and wonder! Looking from a pinnacle of immense height, rocks above rocks, covered with everlasting green, seemed to rise in endless majesty; plains after plains were seen on either side, all thickly covered with their never-failing woods; and the last tints of the setting sun, in that clear, pellucid light peculiar to the land, fringing each faintest outline with the brightest gems.

She stood entranced with admiration and delight, for a space, above all other feeling.

A Frenchman kept a kind of hotel on the summit; an extraordinary novelty in a land, which has no accommodation of the kind; and here did Ada remain a few hours to recruit.

She was again preparing to depart, when the sound of young and merry voices reached her, and English voices too: two young ladies had just arrived by the Mail: they were travelling from Bombay to Poonah.

Ada immediately introduced herself to them. "She was travelling express," she said, "to overtake friends, who belonged to one of the regiments, supposed to be under orders for Affghanistan: did they know whether any troops had sailed?"

"I do not think any are going," said one.

"And I know a detachment of the —th Foot are," said the other.

"Have the —th Foot left?" Ada asked, hesitatingly.

"I am not sure," was the reply. "We were at a large party two evenings ago, and met several of the officers; they certainly talked of expecting

sailing orders every hour. The principal part of the regiment is now at Cabool."

"Did you know the officers?" asked Ada, with an agitated voice.

"We know the Major well—Major Prudhoe; and Captain Peters, too," said one.

"And that nice, merry man, Mr. Smythe," said the other.

How Ada's heart beat! What a weight was withdrawn! She burst into tears. Howard was alive! What transport in the thought!

The young ladies looked surprised: a significant glance passed between them.

Ada blushed. She had been much alarmed, she said, in explanation; had laboured under a belief of the death of one of the gentlemen; was much obliged for their information: she had been—but Ada found it impossible to control her emotions, the tide was too strong; and, making a precipitate retreat, she hurried to her palanquin, that no meaner thought might intrude upon the ecstasy of her feelings.

How dear was the assurance of Howard's well-being! and yet, perhaps she might have been quite

as content, had he not been so very merry. Poor Ada! she seemed as if she cared not now for any trial; nay, even had Howard actually sailed, the trial would be lost sight of in the joy that greeted the assurance of his safety.

She again hurried forward, but with a lighter heart and happier thoughts; and it was yet dark, when she once more reached Panwell. She tarried till the morning had come on, the bungalow offering very superior accommodation to any she had before met with; and shortly afterwards, passing over to Bombay, proceeded at once to her former lodgment.

She found Maria left in charge of the house. Mr. McGregor and his daughters having gone on, a fortnight before, with Mrs. Burdett, to Poonah.

Ada briefly told her of her disappointment and anxiety, and partly explained the object of her coming.

Maria instantly set about the needful inquiries; they were soon made, soon answered. The two companies of the —th Foot had sailed two days before, Mr. Smythe with them, in a steamer, to Kurrachee.

"Then I must follow," Ada instantly replied.

"Follow!" Maria repeated, in great astonishment, "through a wild country like that, and in such a disturbed state? Impossible!"

"My very existence depends upon my going," Ada calmly said; "the danger is secondary."

"Do not think of it, dear young lady," Maria earnestly begged; "we should never see you again; they are such a wild and savage people."

"It is my destiny, Maria," Ada's firmness rose with her entreaties; "I have surmounted dangers so far, and trust to God I may do so still: but follow on, I must; it is my destiny."

Maria saw that it was vain to urge her, although she would not believe in the probability of her really putting her intention into effect.

No sooner, however, had Ada been left to herself, to rest, as Maria thought, but in reality to consider her plans, than Golab was sent for to speak to her.

"Well, Golab," she barely waited for his obeisance, "you have brought me safely so far, and I am entirely content with your duty: do you wish to return?"

"Missie done with Golab?" he asked, earnestly. "Very good Missie."

"My journey is *not* at an end, Golab; but as your service was only engaged to bring me to this place, I am ready to give you the writing, if you wish it."

"Cannot leave Missie: master tell take care, till Missie done come home."

"But I am going into a far country, Golab, upon a very uncertain errand, nor knowing how long I may be kept; and you might not be able to get back, till I could bring you."

"Master tell take care, till done come home," said Golab, and he shook his head most resolutely.

"But your wife, Golab, your children, may not quite like your being lost to them for so long a time."

"Master tell take care," repeated the man; "Niacum know master first attend."

"And you really mean to accompany me, Golab?"

"Very good Missie," and Golab crossed his hands over his breast very expressively; "never leave Missie, done come home."

"Then see, Golab," Ada gave some money into his hand, "send this to your wife, and tell her how pleased I am with your duty, and grateful, too, for its continuance. Tell her, that I will be a good friend to you, and any influence I have with the Judge shall be exerted for your benefit."

"Very good Missie would perhaps tell Niacum?"

"I will, Golab, and take care the money is safely paid to her. And now, Golab, listen."

"Yes, Missie, I very well listen."

"I will place myself entirely under your care and management, Golab; I have that confidence in your duty, no stranger could give me, though many, perhaps, might be found who would seem to have more power to serve me."

"I will do more than better," said Golab, very earnestly.

"I am quite content, Golab. Now, you must understand that my object is to reach the British troops, as quickly as possible; the sooner we can come up with them, the sooner is your duty done: do you comprehend?"

"I very well listen," said Golab, making another of his low obeisances.

"You know, Golab, their destination is the land of the Affghans, and it will be your office to find out some means of taking us there. I understand our only chance will be to engage a patimar; but seek you about in your own way, and bring me the result."

"I very well will, Missie," and Golab, with a bow to the very floor, withdrew.

Ada promptly engaged herself in preparing for her immediate progress, and, with an elasticity of mind that almost surprised herself, seemed eager to enter upon her new trials. She had a strong conviction on her mind that she should now soon reach Howard, and her devoted heart felt no other wish—knew no other interest.

She lost no time in seeking out the agent to

whom her money-order was directed, to renew her wasted purse; had fulfilled her promise to Golab, in writing to his wife; had sent her friend, Edith, an account of her proceedings; and was now giving her father the full details of her adventures since she had last written, with an intimation of her intended travel, when Golab returned.

There was the greatest difficulty in meeting with any boat; almost every kind of craft had been taken up by the transit of the troops and their baggage; but he had found a cotton boat, which he described as a heavy, flat-bottomed vessel, that was then finishing the discharge of her cargo, and its owner would take her to Kurrachee, if she would wait two days for him to get his boat in order.

"Why *two* days, Golab?" said Ada, impatiently; "we shall lose time enough on our voyage. Go back to the man, and say, if he will sail to-morrow evening, I will give him one-fourth more than he asks for the boat."

"Very good Missie," Golab hesitated; "very much dirty boat, Missie."

"Never mind inconvenience, Golab," said Ada, impatiently; "let us get away. Make it your business to have the boat as comfortable as the time will allow. Ayah will go with us; and if my palanquin is taken on board, we shall do very well."

"I very plenty take care," answered Golab; and off he hurried on his mission.

It was in vain that Maria sought to stay Ada's purpose, which, now that it seemed determined upon, alarmed her the more seriously.

"Do not expose yourself to any such danger, my dear lady," she earnestly entreated; "I quite dread that horrid country. I shall never see you more. I never saw *him* more—for it was to Bohkara my husband went—and it has been his grave; and surely will be thine, poor child, if you persist in your purpose."

"It is for my happiness, dear Maria," said Ada, kindly: "do not vex yourself with needless fears. I doubt not for my safety—am confident of success. I could not live, my friend, did I not go."

"Ah! that is but a girl's fancy," Maria

sighed, as she thought to what it was leading her; "do not be offended with your humble friend, but you are sacrificing yourself for some young dream will only cheat your expectations; let me implore you—"

"My dear Maria," Ada kindly interrupted her, "again, I say, it is my destiny; and come what may, I shall follow it out. I know it is in love to me that you speak, but do not add to my anxieties by suggesting fresh troubles."

"Oh, that my master were here!" exclaimed Maria, as she gave up the effort in despair.

The poor woman's sympathies were indeed deeply moved; she had gleaned some inklings of Ada's real inducement for the desperate adventure, and questioned much if any lover were worth the risk and sacrifice: she did more too, for she did not fail to write her young mistresses word of Ada's arrival, and instant intentions; and the following morning to her great surprise and pleasure, though totally irrespective of her communication, Mr. McGregor himself arrived by the Mail, having been suddenly called home on urgent business.

He was much astonished at Maria's information ; to find the guest awaiting his arrival. He looked for her rising with impatience.

"My dear young friend," he said, after the first greetings were over, "I cannot hear of your purposed journey, without great pain and anxiety: our kind friend, Mrs. Burdett, takes such an affectionate interest in you, that I cannot consent that one, really so estimable, and who, in fact, has been the means of bringing us together, should rush upon such a fearful undertaking."

"I am obliged to you all for your kindness," Ada said ; "but I have no option."

"Yes, yes! you have," Mr. McGregor replied, "stay where you are; or rather go on with me to the purer air of Poonah, and there calmly wait until your friend returns; even if you overtake him, what care can he take of you amid the troubles and duties of active service, and especially of a service of such a perilous kind? You must surely have shut your eyes to all the reality of your enterprise."

"Not so, Mr. McGregor," Ada said firmly,

"I see all the trouble plainly enough; but it is my duty."

"Delusion, my dear young friend," he continued, "mere delusion! I can see plainly enough the peril, the risk, the many strong objections to your proceeding; and as the father of a family, I really must put my veto on your persisting in it."

"What mean you, Mr. McGregor," asked Ada, in great alarm; "you surely would not cramp my ability?"

"Certainly not, my friend," Mr. McGregor replied significantly, "save by *moral* force. I put myself in your father's place: they tell me, Alice, you have one that loves you dearly, and I would urge a father's love to stay a daughter's sacrifice: for heaven's sake, my dear young friend, think of the reality of that you seek to encounter—to force a passage through a country, sufficiently lawless at the best of times, now wild with excitement and turbulence; and you, a young, beautiful girl, without a protector, you would be exposed to a thousand dreadful risks, I dare not think of."

"God will protect me!" Ada fervently said; "God *has* protected me so far: He knows that my purpose is right, and will guard me still."

"Not, my child, if you rush needlessly into danger: it were indeed an almost tempting of His providence to dare what is before you: think you, is it right to follow out a will, against every caution and advice, in the face of remonstrance; casting aside the pleadings of affection; to rush from safety and sympathy to peril and suffering? I question the rectitude of such a purpose."

"I am grateful for the interest which dictates your warmth," Ada spoke earnestly; "but my purpose may not change; be it right or wrong, I must pursue it."

"I cannot suffer it," Mr. McGregor moved not from his opposition; "listen to me, Alice; I will do anything to content you, short of letting you go on this mad errand. Stay with us in peace and safety, and our love shall omit nothing to make you happy. I will send a special messenger with any letter to your friend,

and pledge myself to bring his answer safe—at least wait till that is done.”

“Your kindness avails me not, dear Sir. Think me not ungrateful, but I am resolved on my purpose, and cannot change.”

“Infatuated girl!” Mr. McGregor could scarcely command his annoyance; “be the consequences at your own door!”

“Do not be angry, dear Mr. McGregor,” Ada spoke imploringly, “nor thwart my object; rather counsel me to my better safety.”

“I will be no party to the scheme,” Mr. McGregor said, determinedly, “directly or indirectly. I have no claim to prevent your going, but I will never have to reproach myself with any participation in it, however slightly implied.”

“And you are offended with me?” Ada grieved to think it; “and I must part with a kind friend in his anger; this is indeed a painful trial.”

“I am but angry for your good,” Mr. McGregor said; “I fain would preserve you from what may be your destruction; but I say

not more, indeed it only seems to wed you the more resolutely to your purpose."

"And will you not even know my plans?"

"Most certainly not; if you will persist in going, go; but since I cannot prevent them, I will not even know them."

And, without giving her the opportunity of again speaking, he quitted the apartment, and presently afterwards Ada saw his palanquin taking him to his place of business.

Mr. McGregor, indeed, was most deeply mortified at what he thought Ada's persisted obstinacy, and thought, by the course he had adopted to stay her purpose; but he was sadly mistaken.

CHAPTER IX.

" A flow'r had dropp'd upon the river's flood ;
Now past the plains, and now the hanging wood,
Was swept upon its tide ;
Now whirlpools came, the eddying rush it stay'd,
Marr'd the rude rock, until at length it made
Its rest on the far wide."

ADA grieved to part from her kind friend on such discontenting terms ; she knew he would not return until his late dinner-hour, and she had fixed to be on board the patimar before sunset, so as to sail with the night tide. The wind was favourable, the moon just past the full, her own purpose urgent, so that all things concurred to influence her departure.

Golab had been very active in making the boat as comfortable as the time permitted, and

furnishing such requirements as she had judged needful for the expedition. Very fortunately Maria had not taken the same view of things as her master had, and willingly assisted in her preparations. She also knew a family who had lived in Affghanistan, and from them learnt many particulars, as to climate and customs, which were of infinite use to Ada's preparations.

When evening, therefore, had come, Ada was taken on board in her palanquin. She was somewhat startled at first to see the black, heavy-looking thing which she had engaged, and which seemed to defy all hope of expedition, broad, flat-bottomed build as it was, with its one triangular sail, its only trust; it had but one small cabin, which, when the palanquin was carried into it, left not much space at liberty, and dark and grimy that little seemed; but when she began to look more particularly about her, she found Golab had made all so clean and nice, that she became more reconciled, and at once set to work to arrange the cabin to her mind.

They soon had lifted the anchor, and, ere the sun went down, had passed from the harbour to the open sea.

To Ada's surprise, the heavy barge went swiftly on that night; but wind and tide both helped her course, and a very log could scarcely have done less. When, however, the tide returned, and the wind died away, as it did the next morning, her more agreeable calculations fell to the ground, and she found it a very problem to arrive at any probable time for their reaching Kurrachee.

They coasted nearly the whole way, and what was worse, when the tide was against them, or the wind died away, the tindal would order the sail to be taken down, and would anchor until the times and the seasons improved. Oh! the weary days those were, and Ada burning with desire to reach her destination!

And then a breeze came on, and tossed the lumbering thing to and fro, as if at the mercy of the waves; the boatmen, all the while, careless of accident, as they could swim like very monkeys. And yet the boat went on, slowly as it

was, and far more slowly as it seemed to the impatient heart that watched its progress. At the end of the ninth day, they had reached the Indus, and soon the low, barren land about Kurrachee appeared before them.

Their tindal, who seemed to be a man of better information than was customary with his calling, knew Kurrachee well, and had undertaken to find Ada a guide to take her through the country. And it was with a glad and lightened heart, that she put her foot upon the new land—upon the land which she knew contained one object dearer to her than all of life, for the love of which she had sacrificed every other tie of life—all other love !

But other considerations pressed. Ada had been taken into one of the common huts on the beach, and common indeed it appeared ; it was a low, mud-thatched building, of one single apartment, where father, mother, and children had been born, and lived, and slept, with a small hole in the roof to let out the smoke of the cooking ; and what struck Ada more particularly, was the absence of every kind of furniture, the

interior being literally bare mud walls, with a floor of similar material, on which the people sat, slept, and off which they ate.

Golab had here an opportunity of testing his powers of interpreting, as he made himself well understood—an achievement of which he was no little proud. He had boasted to Ada of some knowledge of the Arab language, which, being pretty generally known throughout the Affghan country, promised to stand the travellers to good account.

Very soon, however, the tindal returned to them : he had found the very man to take them on, who knew the country far and near, having traversed it full many a time and oft. He was a native of the far north of Beloochistan, though of Affghan parents, and having now a call to Cashmere—that land of sweet and beauteous things, he would undertake to convey them to any distance they pleased.

The man accordingly was introduced : he was a fine, handsome-looking fellow, apparently about twenty-five years old, above six feet high, very erect and firm in his carriage ; his fine, broad

shoulders and sinewy limbs evincing great prowess, while his ample forehead and well-defined head spoke of equally great intellectual capacity : his light complexion told that he came from the northern land, while his straight, Grecian nose, claimed a descent from among the beautiful race of the Cashmerians. The only feature Ada could object to—and, indeed, she gazed at him with unrepressed admiration—was his mouth, with its scornfully curling lip, and the bad temper which it spoke ; and for which, not even his beautiful teeth, and long, curled moustache could compensate.

He wore the fine shawl-turban of the country, and his gauze-like muslin dress, and wide drawers set off his general appearance to great advantage. He bowed gracefully to Ada as he appeared before her, and his large, lustrous eye fixed itself so glowingly upon her, with that quick, ardent homage, which a mind, instinct with the love of beauty, might offer to beauty's queen, that Ada blushed—was almost abashed before it.

The bargain was quickly made : Abdool, for

such his name, had travelled much, both in his own and the neighbouring countries, and was cognizant of the Hindostanee language, which, although not his native tongue, was well known to Golab, so that an easy communication was open to them.

Abdool recommended that their journey should be on horseback, as being the most certain and expeditious: occasionally a bullock-carriage might be used; a camel would travel on far more rapidly, but the lady could not ride, so awkward its pace; horses could be hired at almost every village they might come to; and when they had advanced some little to the north, both modes might be used during the day to expedite their progress.

Ada readily assented, and at once prepared for immediate departure. It was now afternoon; Ada longed for active exertion after the monotony of the weary boat, and thought to gain a day's advance before the night set in. And very presently Abdool appeared with the needful complement of horses, together with a couple of

bullocks to convey the luggage; and very speedily the cavalcade marched on.

Ada soon felt that she was already in a more temperate climate; the evening air was cool and refreshing; the exercise of riding, after her long and wearying inactivity, invigorated her spirits; she felt that now she was indeed in the track to happiness, and she experienced an elasticity and light-heartedness, to which she had been long a stranger.

When night came on, they stopped at a way-side hut, miserable indeed to look at. Poor Ada shrank at the very thought of such a lodgment, and fain had submitted to any fatigue than adopted such a domicile. But Golab soon explained that there was no accommodation for travellers in this new land, not even the usually wretched bungalows of his native country could be met with; and, compelled to yield to events, she commenced making such arrangements as the circumstances permitted.

She had, luckily, been forewarned, at Bombay, that some provision would be necessary for the

night's rest, had even been recommended to take a tent with her, and, though she had not adopted the latter suggestion, as being too cumbersome to her ideas of dispatch, she had provided herself with a light, folding cot, which enabled her to make up a tolerable couch, even amid such desolation. Placing it, therefore, in the most secluded part of the hut, they fastened up a sheet before it, so as still farther to insure her privacy; and the Ayah lying at her feet, and Golab keeping watch at the door, she committed herself to sleep, and, in spite of her disquiet, slept soundly.

Such was Ada's style of lodgment for many succeeding nights. She found a beautiful country, indeed a perfect garden in luxuriance at times, flanked by the everlasting hills; but no care or provision for the wayfarer, whose only chance was such deserted dwellings as had formed her first night's resting-place; sometimes cow-sheds; sometimes the very holes in the rocks.

Each morning they set out early on their continued route—a march, as it was called, at

walking pace, for three or four hours, ere the heat stayed them ; and then a rest until the evening, sometimes in a way-side hut, at others, under the thick trees ; until, as the day declined, they again passed on for nearly as long a time again. Ada found it very fatiguing at first, and sufficiently irksome, but it was the way of the country, and she could not induce them to change it ; indeed, the slow paces of the bullocks made it indispensable to rule their speed by theirs : at times, too, the inequalities of their way, and the frequent crossing of the rivers in the wilder districts, rendered their progress difficult and tardy.

Their usual mode of travelling was for Ada to ride, with Abdool on her right hand, and Golab on her left ; the Ayah, attended by Abdool's servant or follower, falling behind. Under ordinary circumstances, Ada would have ridden alone, and led the way, nor would her guide or attendants have presumed to address her, unless she had spoken to them ; but in their now long and arduous journey, and Ada so dependant on them for help, or advice, or information, she was,

in a manner, compelled to make them her companions.

Golab was very important in his new office, and most assiduous in his care of his mistress; Abdool, too, was indefatigable in his attentions, and seemed to vie with the former, which of them might oftener win their lady's smile; indeed, Abdool, at times, would scarcely brook Golab's interference, his quick, hasty temper, too often showing itself, so that Ada had a difficult part to play to preserve peace between them; for, observant as Golab was of even her implied wishes, the other watched her every look and action with such close notice, his large, expressive eye being almost continually upon her, that Golab had no chance with him of any equal participation of his mistress' thanks, and then it was *his* turn to be vexed.

Another source of anxiety occurred to her, in the quick and somewhat violent fancy which her Ayah had taken to Abdool's follower, Bappoo, as they called him: a good-looking fellow enough, and who managed by his wily tongue, though only half understood by her, to captivate

the silly girl, until she had little thought for anything else; inconvenient enough to Ada's comfort, when frequently her night's rest was disturbed to ascertain that her body-guard was safely at her feet.

Ada was much interested in the girl, and, besides feeling so dependant on her services, was anxious to take her back safely to her friends.

Ayah had lived for years in English families, and could speak the language tolerably well, without, as Golab did, retaining her native idiom: and Ada had found interest and amusement in her banishment from other society, in listening to her tales of her country and her tribe. She was a native of Madura, in the Madras district, one of the lowest sinks of superstition, where objects are worshipped and publicly exhibited for adoration in their highways, which it would be disgusting even to allude to: where it was the usual custom to boil down their infants for the anointing of their horrid idols; and to sprinkle their fields with human blood, as the only surety of propitiating a blessing on them, and making them productive. On the great sacrificial rock,

indeed, on the Malabar coast, it was supposed that no less than three hundred victims were annually immolated to these horrid superstitions.

At certain times of great festival, it was customary to choose the purest and most beautiful virgin they could find, as an especial offering to their idol.

And Ayah had been selected, when barely twelve years old, for one of such victims: suddenly taken from her parents, she was carried to the temple of the god, and there, decked out in precious stones and gayest flowers, was kept bound before the impious idol, till the appointed hour of sacrifice should arrive.

But Ayah had a lover, young and ardent as herself, and he felt little inclined to yield his beloved to the murderous knife, although it was the thundering god who bade the sacrifice: thought, too, that his love could bring as true a bliss as that the hoary priests had promised her; and he had managed, with the co-operation of a friend, to get access the preceding night to

the temple where she was kept, and bear her safely off.

When morning came, and the sacrilege was discovered, the priests were mad with rage, suspected the daring hand that had perpetrated the outrage—what but a lover's would have attempted it? they tracked his steps, followed him to the distant country where he had fled, and murdered him by slowest tortures.

Ayah had escaped their search, and, taken into an English family who had learnt her history, was saved from molestation. But she had never forgotten the horror of her suffering; though full seven years had elapsed, still did its vivid memory at times affright her, as if it were a present terror.

But whether Ayah had kept her first love since that fearful time or no, it seemed very visible that she had no longer intentions of so doing: the very vehemence of her present passion seeming to make up for the lost time.

It appeared strange to Ada, that after such an escape, and her subsequent opportunities of in-

formation, Ayah should still maintain her original idolatry, still grovel in the filth of its impurities ; but as Ayah was born, so she continued, and to all her mistress' remonstrances of its absurdity and inutility, would answer, it was her religion, and her father's before her, and would do for her.

Ada took great interest in studying the religious diversities of her followers, and contrasting them with her own pure faith : perhaps a wider range of belief could scarcely have existed in so small a community. Herself a disciple of the truth ; that expander of the human intellect ! ennobler of the human heart !

Then Golab, with his strange mixture of the Christian and Jewish rites and doctrines in the pages of his Koran, with a worship and character so like her own in many respects, as plainly to betray the origin of its fraud.

Then Abdool, the fire-worshipper, making the pure element his god ; and turning its light, and heat, and blessing into a curse.

And then the benighted idol-worshipper,

trusting in wood and stone, and making the dumb block her confidence, the obscene thing her adoration !

Ada might well thank God that her lot had been cast in a better land, her trust upon a purer faith !

Abdool had taken great interest in listening to Ada's speaking ; indeed, he seemed, in all respects, to view her as a kind of divinity, on which his eyes could never sufficiently feast themselves ; and he had taken great pains to catch an English word or two, and learn their meaning.

It seemed as amusement by the way, and Ada had met his desire, and taught him several common phrases, of which he was very proud.

Abdool was intelligent and quick, and moreover retained what he learnt ; and, before the week was out, could make himself understood without Golab's intervention, the ambition to do which seemed to rouse every faculty of his soul into operation.

He had already managed to describe to her the beautiful Vale of Cashmere, lying amid its

guardian mountains, with its terraced gardens, one above the other; its forests of sweet roses, and its profusion of luscious fruits.

He had told her of the ancient tombs of patriarchs, who had lived thousands of years ago, and who, it was said, had left the people that Jewish cast of countenance, which evidenced their origin in part from some olden commixture with Hebrew blood; showed her, too, more than one site of some far-distant battle, whose renown had survived its very name.

And more he fain had told her, would Ada have listened; it seemed such pleasure to him to know that he was in her notice; but Golab began to take great umbrage at what he called his mistress' neglect of him; took it much to heart, that, while his every thought was engrossed in her service, and his constant care scarcely knew how enough to secure her comfort, all her regards were given to this stranger, who might perhaps, be as faithful as himself, but whose looks Golab did not half like.

"Missie can do very well without Golab,"

he said to her one morning, when they had been about ten days on their journey. "Golab no use now."

"Why, Golab!" Ada exclaimed, not slightly surprised at his words: "are we at our journey's end?"

"No, Missie," he replied, in the same dissatisfied tone; "not done come yet; but me no use now; better go back."

"Better go back!" repeated Ada. "Why, what is the matter, Golab? Has anything offended you?"

"No, Missie," replied Golab; "me not wanted now; better have writing, Missie."

"And would you leave me in this strange land, Golab?" asked Ada, who began to see the nature of the offence; "without a protector, too?"

"No, no, Missie have protector," Golab quickly answered; "more plenty liked—more better guide."

"Ah! I see," said Ada; "jealous of Abdool?—but, indeed, Golab, you could not be more

mistaken : I would rather trust you than a score of Abdools."

" Missie may well," Golab said, significantly ; " sometime Missie may think so."

" I think so now, Golab ; so be content : no one shall injure you in my regard. And as to Abdool, it is as well to be civil, as we are so entirely in his hands."

" I no like him," he said, passionately ; " I no like that Abdool ; he very bad look."

" Well, never mind him, Golab ; he is very civil and attentive ; let us keep him so. It will not now be many days that we shall have him with us ; and be sure of my trust and confidence in you."

" He very bad look," Golab repeated ; " I no like him, Missie."

" Still be careful of quarrelling with him, Golab. Remember we are in a strange land, and in his power. I hope I may have to put in the writing, that Golab was as prudent as he was faithful ?"

" I will try, Missie," said Golab, but half-

satisfied; "but I no like him—very bad look."

This conversation had occurred during one of their daily stoppages, while Ada was resting during the heat of the day; and Golab had scarcely parted from her, than Ayah came inquiring whether her mistress had called for her.

Ada, at the moment, was musing on what Golab had said, and the fresh trouble which seemed to be impending over her from this new and unexpected source, and did not notice Ayah's hesitation, or that there was anything unusual in her inquiry; and, simply answering in the negative, had expected her withdrawal; for the Indian servants, with all their faults and objections, have one good quality—they never take the slightest liberties with their masters or mistresses, but, keeping up a most deferential respect, would not even speak, unless previously spoken to.

But when Ayah, in place of retiring, continued to talk to her, Ada knew that some

strong under-current was at work to influence her coming.

"Golab was so ill-natured," she said; "he would never tell her anything."

"What do you say, Ayah?" Ada wished to draw out her meaning: "what won't Golab tell you?"

"Never tell when Missie wants me," she said, sullenly. "Gone so ill-natured—never tell nothing."

"I will not have Golab vexed, Ayah," Ada spoke authoritatively; "he means well; and you know, Ayah, I trust to his protection for our safe journey."

"He nobody, Missie," she said, spitefully, "but a cross, good-for-nothing thing, as he is, to quarrel with everybody; only just now, Missie, he behaved to nice Abdool infamous."

"I do not wish to hear of any of your bickerings," her mistress said, though she would gladly have known what it was that caused the commotion. "It is a pity you cannot manage to agree together, under our present circumstances."

"I can agree, Missie, well enough," still peevish; "but if Golab insults Bappoo again, as he did this morning, Bappoo will teach him better manners."

"I am afraid, Ayah," said Ada, sternly, "that Bappoo is too much considered for the peace of other people, besides Golab. Don't be foolish, girl, and lose a good mistress. Indeed, I am sorry Abdool ever brought the man with us."

"But he's worth a dozen Golabs, any how, Missie," still very peevish; "and why should Golab go and say that Abdool is not honest? Golab had better mind, or he may have to repent."

"I will not listen to your complaints, Ayah," Ada spoke decisively. "Enough: leave me."

Ayah dared not to disobey her command, though she fain had said more; and, still muttering to herself, sullenly withdrew. And Ada, whose curiosity was excited, watched her through the window of the cabin, and saw her at once join the troublesome Bappoo, and keep up a very animated discourse with him for some time.

“ Oh, this love ! this love ! ” said Ada to herself, “ what mischief it does make in the world ! what evil tempers it can give rise to !—What fresh turmoil it is letting loose for me, too ! ” thought Ada, as she ruminated on the apparent discord which was smouldering among her attendants.

Ada might have suggested other troubles which that same urchin had caused, even nearer home ; and, knowing how every sacrifice had been made in other quarters to keep him quiet, might have better borne his testy cry elsewhere.

We do not say she did *not*.

CHAPTER X.

“ It was a weary, weary flight,
No well-remember'd grove in sight,
Nor field, nor haunt, where the glad eye
Might rest itself contentedly ;
But all unknown—though bright the view—
That bird pass'd on—on, on she flew—
If but one glimpse of home !”

It was now the twelfth day of their pilgrimage, and with the exception of Beilus, which Ada had seen marked on the map as in her route, they had not passed through any one place of note. She had calculated their progress day by day, and almost hourly looked for some glimpse of Keelat, the next known name upon her way, and

which Abdool had now for two days promised them to reach.

The country was still most beautiful, luxuriant in its verdancy ; in the valleys, one rich, teeming wood, whose chief feature was a lofty tree whose rich, pendant, primrose, cup-like flowers scented the air, far and wide, with its delicious perfume. The road still very hilly, continually rising and falling, and their path, sometimes leading over the lofty mountain passes, was as frequently off any public highway, as on one. The rivers, too, at times, were deep, the fords difficult and dangerous, and much time was lost in passing them. The climate still was hot, nor did the more temperate breezes that Ada had looked for, yet assist their march. She calculated, indeed, that their daily advance, under all their obstacles, was at least an average of twenty miles ; and she began to look impatiently for some sure evidence of her actual progress.

Another circumstance surprised her too : although she had naturally expected to find some trace of the passage of the troops along their route, for they must have traversed their path not

three weeks before them, so far, they had not seen any ; although, indeed, frequent tidings were brought by Abdool of their march, which he gleaned in the villages, where they had rested, but not one straggler, not one invalid, either man or beast, occurred to their actual notice.

The same moody disquiet had continued with her attendants, and Ada was kept in continual fear of some serious outbreak ; the perilous consequences of which, in her lonely condition, giving rise to even greater anxiety to be certified of her real progress.

Abdool's manner had also begun to give her uneasiness ; he was still, indeed, most respectful ; still held her in extreme reverence ; but there was a warmth in the look with which he watched her, an evident, deep admiration, which, in spite of his self-command, continually betrayed him into fits of jealousy it was impossible to mistake.

Ada was afraid that he might have misunderstood her notice of him, and presumed upon it. Wild and impetuous, he seemed to know no moderation of feeling ; but, once impressed, was

carried, as on a whirlwind's rush, beyond all thought of self-control.

Creature of impulse, as he was, with small, if any, correcting principle to restrain him, it were indeed sufficiently perilous to be the unwilling object of his regard, and entirely in his power ; and Ada had too strong evidence of the impression she had made, not to tremble for the consequences

She had been suddenly awakened that morning long before daylight ; she had evidently been very fast asleep, and there was no noise or disturbance to have roused her ; her lodgment, too, had been more favourable than usual, Abdool having gained them an apartment for the night in a better kind of dwelling. And yet Ada had a strange, undefined impression that some intrusion had roused her from her sleep. She had looked instantly at Ayah, who, at her usual post, by her mistress' feet, seemed in the deepest slumber ; and, unable to account for the disturbance, she lay awake, watching, listening, pondering, for some long, uncertain time.

It might be an hour, or even more, when, to her surprise, she saw Ayah quietly raise herself from the floor, and creep towards her cot. It was still night, but the trees close by the window of her resting-place were covered with myriads of fire-flies, and they cast sufficient light within the place to enable Ada to watch her slightest movement.

After gazing on her for some minutes, as if to assure herself that her mistress was asleep, she cautiously felt among her trunks; and Ada could hear the rustling of her hand, as she groped about their contents, evidently for plunder, or some strong curiosity.

Ada called out her name, as she had been often wont to do, when she desired to know that she was on her mat; and instantly was her voice heard from the front of the cot, with her usual answer, "Yes, Missie;" and all was again still.

Ada, however, still watched, and, after another long space, she again detected Ayah rising as before; not this time coming near her, but

stealthily creeping from the apartment, and, passing Golab as readily as if he were a log of wood, make good her exit without disturbing him.

Ada was full of wonder and curiosity to solve the girl's proceedings. Did she simply wish to pilfer the means of pleasuring her lover, or was some greater mischief intended? One thing was certain—there was no further confidence to be placed in the girl: her being near her, indeed, might be the very means of bringing intrusion on her sleeping hours; and Ada lay restless and anxious, thinking over her perils, and wondering how she was to surmount them.

Her anxious mind seemed to find a hundred new doubts, a hundred new dangers; risks upon risks seemed to pile themselves up before her into a mountain heap; and there was no resting-place, on which she might put her foot, if but for one moment's peace.

The Ayah, no doubt, was dishonest; was she false? Was Abdool true? Violent and passionate he was, in sorry fact, and peril enough there was in the fact; but was he faithful to his trust? Was he really guiding them in

their right path? For even that, she began to doubt.

So many things concurred to raise suspicion; and now, that she calculated more minutely, they ought, of necessity, to have reached Keelat. The still-continued heat, the absence of all vestiges of the troops; and, now she recollected herself, the sun for many days after leaving Kurrachee, had always risen before them, while latterly his rising had been to their right, certifying, beyond doubt, a changed direction.

She determined to be satisfied; that very day to gain contenting and sure information.

The daylight had come, and she prepared to rise. To her astonishment, Ayah was asleep at her feet, on her usual mat. She could not have returned without Ada's detecting her. Was it but a dream, after all?

Their morning's march, however, had scarcely commenced, than she closely questioned Abdool about their actual progress, pointing out more than one discrepancy in his statements, and expressing her suspicions that he had not brought them the nearest route.

The blood mantled to his brow, as Abdool understood her doubts; he seemed wild with rage, or some strong excitement; but Ada thought she detected a consciousness of guilt; saw, in spite of his loud denials, that he dared not lift his eyes to hers, and was confirmed in her belief.

"To-morrow day, come Keelat," he said in his imperfect speech, "not come more soon."

"So you have told me, Abdool, again and again," Ada said, austerely; "but I know that we have come far beyond the distance which ought to have brought us there, and I am not satisfied."

"Missie wait to-morrow day," he said, beseechingly "no angry now, Missie, see to-morrow day."

"I am quite dissatisfied," Ada repeated, still looking very coldly at him; "I will wait to-morrow, Abdool, but if again misled—"

"Missie wait to-morrow day," said Abdool, his eye flashing unwonted fire.

Ada marked him eagerly: his assurance

seemed idle to her, his irritation convinced her that all was not right; while the thought how completely she was in his power, made the very chance of any treachery perfectly fearful.

When, therefore, they were crossing one of the many rivers, Abdool busy with the horses, and she left alone with Golab, she spoke aside to him :

"Golab, I am not satisfied with this Abdool; I do not think him honest."

"That way I never done think, Missie," said Golab.

"Do you know of yourself, Golab, where we really are?"

"No, Missie," and Golab shook his head; "but not that place he tell."

"I begin to think as much myself," said Ada, thoughtfully; "I doubt, too, our being in the way the troops have gone."

"Missie must not believe Abdool," Golab said, earnestly; "he tell lie—sure he bad man."

"Indeed, Golab, I am afraid he has some

purpose of his own to keep us back. Pray, Golab, what have you been quarrelling with him about ?”

“ Who say I quarrel, Missie ?”

“ Ayah told me so.”

“ Ayah is plenty bad woman, Missie ; tell plenty lie too : *he* quarrel with me—want to make fight—sometime to get me away : Golab too much take care of Missie.”

“ Ah ! I see how it is, Golab ; but do you still take care of me, and at the same time avoid any open rupture with Abdool ; and mind, Golab, when we stop this morning, which we are to do at yonder village in the plain, do you go apart from the rest, and learn near to what large town we are : get me as many names as you can : also ascertain particularly that the troops have passed, and how long since : do you understand ?”

“ Yes, Missie, understand.”

“ Then do not speak more, Golab. Abdool may observe us.”

They had taken up their halt that morning at a small, poor village, where they had difficulty in

obtaining the meanest lodgment; not that the place itself was so desolate, but that other travellers were there before them, and had engrossed what small accommodation it possessed. Abdool had therefore urged their braving the sun's heat, and passing on a very few miles farther to a celebrated banyan tree, which travellers often made their resting-place.

Ada willingly consented; it would be so much in advance, the heat she cared not for: and merely waiting to give Golab a private sign to make the enjoined inquiries, she at once rode on.

The tree might well be celebrated: it formed a continuous grove of full a quarter of a mile, branching and rooting in every direction: it was close by the way-side, and so impervious were its recesses to the sun's rays, that it was luxurious to be beneath its shade.

So Ada thought, as quickly selecting a spot, whose open space seemed like a sylvan temple, she was resting herself after the fatigues of the morning, when to her dismay, Abdool presented himself before her. She had sent Ayah away

not many moments previously to seek Golab, whose communication she was most anxious to receive, and she was therefore compelled to listen, whatever Abdool might say: she feared, indeed, that his vehement passion might lead him to some departure from that respectful deference he had so far shown her; and laying a great restraint upon herself, thought to assume the appearance of a composure she was far from feeling.

Abdool stood at a distance from her, as if propitiating her pardon of his boldness: his hands folded on his breast, his head slightly depressed, his eyes fixed on the ground.

"Well, Abdool," Ada spoke sternly, "wherefore this intrusion? I trust it is mere accident?"

But Abdool answered not; he approached nearer to her, and throwing himself on his knees, bent his head to the ground at her feet.

Ada knew well enough what he meant: there was the speaking eloquence of nature in his attitude, and it was so well, so elegantly done,

that, in spite of her alarm and agitation, she could not but admire. Desirous, however, of not betraying any sign of having understood his meaning, she calmly asked him :

“What would you, Abdool? what boon seek you, that I have the power to grant?”

To see the wild, impassioned look with which he answered her, as raising himself on his knees, he pressed his hands to his heart, and gazed rapturously upon her! words were idle.

“Speak, Abdool,” she continued, seeking to gain time by feigning still to misunderstand him, “what do you mean—what would you?”

He again bent down, took up the foot which lay before him, and placing it on his neck, said passionately :

“Servant! slave! always slave!”

“I am content, Abdool,” Ada restrained her agitation; “I will trust you—nor doubt you more, if you do but make better speed.”

“More beautiful light!” he spoke with wild impetuosity; “more fair flower than any rose Cashmere—heart queen! Abdool, slave—ever slave!”

He quickly drew from beneath the folds of his belt, a massive chain, that sparkled with jewels of the rarest kind, and placed it at her feet ; and was proceeding to lay there a beautiful neck-band, that most graceful of Eastern ornaments, when Ada sprung to her feet, and said scornfully :

“ What mean you, man ? Take up your baubles. Away, away ! ”

Abdool started up ; astonishment and indignation mantled to his features ; quick rage trembled on his lip. He pointed to the rejected offering, and proudly said :

“ Most poor these—more rich own country—Abdool chief—he prince—love lady very great—love always—none else— ”

“ Enough, enough, ” Ada could hardly stay his impetuous words ; “ what madness is this ? ” she spurned the offering with her foot ; “ insult me not more with such language. ”

To see his scowling look ! the workings of his passion ! the turbulence of a mind that brooked not contradiction, and was little used to the

goadings of mortified vanity ! to be thwarted in so fond a desire ! For a moment he stood as if irresolute of purpose—what a moment of horror that was ! Ada's very soul shrunk within her ; then one mad, eager gaze, as, snatching up the spurned presents, he darted through the thicket ; but not before Ada had detected a look of such intense resentment—well might she shudder ! She felt that she had turned a friend into a foe ; the keeper of her safety into its betrayer ; her confidence on her perilous path into dismay.

It was, indeed, a fearful turmoil she had brought upon herself ; so utterly in the power of the wild, ungoverned passions of a lawless, and now vindictive man ! What might she not fear ? But repentance came too late now ; there was no space for such, when the urgent peril pressed so painfully for its avoidance.

That moment Golab attended her summons ; he had only then been told of it. He had not omitted her wish ; she knew that, indeed, from his previous manner, nor had his thoughtful

looks been cause of satisfaction to her ; but she had not prepared herself for the full extent of Golab's communication.

" Missie, poor Missie ! " he said, sorrowfully, looking carefully round, lest any eaves-dropper should be near, " Abdool most bad man—done tell Missie nothing but lie."

" What do you mean, Golab ? " Ada asked, anxiously.

" He never come near Keelat at all, Missie," Golab looked most indignantly. " Done tell all lie : no troop ever come—they long, far away."

" And where are we, Golab ? In mercy, tell me instantly : near what place ?"

" I never done heard one name, Missie, that I know," and Golab shook his head sorrowfully ; " but come two days more, and Missie in plenty bad country—in the Noorzye country."

" Is it possible ? " exclaimed Ada, of their lawless and savage tribes she had often heard : " so base as that ?"

" Yes, Missie. Abdool great man there :

when he done come, he kill Golab, and make Missie wife."

Ada felt her blood creep through her veins.

"You but guess this, Golab," she said;
"only think it so."

"More, Missie," he answered, sadly. "Abdool done know travellers at gone by village; he tell them him taking wife to own country. And Bappoo tell Ayah same thing; I never knew if I not listen."

"And Ayah, too, in the plot against us?"

"Yes, Missie, Ayah plenty bad: taken all to Bappoo; done tell him everything."

"Alas! alas! what a peril I am in!" Ada's anguish was beyond her control. "Am I altogether lost?"

"Poor Missie don't too much 'fraid," comforted Golab. "See, Missie! I done get two knife. Golab will take care, Missie."

"I am entirely dependent on your faithfulness, Golab," said Ada; "but violence will avail us little."

"Missie must get away," whispered Golab,

very earnestly ; “ when done come night, she must run away these bad men.”

“ But how, Golab ? They will watch us : be sure they will never give us the chance of escaping them.”

“ Missie leave all to me,” said Golab, very earnestly ; “ only don’t Missie sleep to-night—“ only make seem.”

“ And where are we to escape to, Golab ?”

“ Any where more better, Missie, than bad Abdool.”

“ Indeed, you are right, Golab,” Ada said, anxiously ; “ but be very wise, and very wary : and see, Golab, pass this way through the thick openings of the tree, that they may not know of our conference. Heaven bless you, Golab !” she felt, indeed, that she had no trust, under heaven, save in his truth.

It was Ada’s study, during that evening’s progress, to conciliate Abdool as much as she could, and to show every sign of renewed confidence. It was long, indeed, before the murky gloom would yield, but it did brighten in time ; and then his wild, impetuous spirit seemed again to

riot in the fancied thought of her softened feeling to him, compelling her, at any risk, to refrain.

That evening, their path had led over one of the highest mountain-passes they had yet met with, and their progress was slow and difficult: the sun was setting ere they had surmounted the ascent.

The next village was yet many miles distant. They had no torches with them, the bullocks far behind, their horses jaded.

Abdool had missed his way, and was only now recovering it. He seemed anxious and uncertain what to do, for the brief twilight was even then fading away. The summit gained, they hurried down the steep descent, hoping even yet to reach their lodging-place; when suddenly they turned upon some spacious caves, close by their path, which Golab immediately proposed to adopt for their night's stoppage.

They were meagre enough for such purpose, were evidently unfrequented, being choked with rubbish, and their openings thickly beset with the prickly cactus; and Abdool loudly objected

to the arrangement, declared that the village was nigh gained, talked of the wild beasts about—it might be their very lair, and eagerly urged their advance.

Ayah, too, began vociferously to declare her fears at such a dormitory, and prayed her mistress to proceed; while Bappoo, with every sign of terror in his countenance, actually crept by, as if to secure his own safety.

But Golab still maintained his stand, himself explored their recesses, while they stood watching him, and declared, that, with small labour, they would find a better resting-place there than many they had already adopted; pointed out how readily fires could be kept up; and, appealing to Ada, who at once guessing that he had some motive in what he did, assented to his views, very sensibly to Abdool's annoyance.

They had, before this, made their night's sojourn in caves; but they were such, as being generally frequented by wayfarers like themselves, often afforded comforts, scarcely to be appreciated, except by those who have tried them.

The present ones, being in a wild and solitary track, had no traces of ever having been used for any such purpose, and required a regular cleansing, before Ada could occupy them; but Golab set about it in such good earnest, that a comparatively brief time served to place Ada in her wonted dormitory.

The caves were several in number, affording plenty of accommodation for all the party, horses and all. The one, however, that Golab had prepared for Ada, was a smaller and deeper one, and on that account more compact for her comfort; and had Ada been as much at ease as the provisions for her convenience were calculated to make her, she might have slept as happily as in a palace.

Having seen his mistress provided for, Golab retired to assist in making up the horses for the night. The bullocks had brought a tolerable supply of grain for their provender, and their beds were already prepared by the bullock-drivers.

Abdool and his servant seemed little disposed to give any assistance to arrangements in such

direct opposition to their wishes, but sat sullenly in the cave adjoining Ada's, each smoking his evening-pipe, and looking very daggers at Golab, as he passed by them ; and having seen that the fires were well supplied, and given orders to the drivers to keep them burning, Golab sat down at the mouth of Ada's cave, on his accustomed guard.

There was but one mouth to these two caves ; and Ada's, without being exactly an inner one, opened abruptly into the other, where Abdool and his follower were ; and as Golab sat with his back against a kind of pillar, that separated the two caves, he could, by merely looking beneath his eye-brows, observe their proceedings ; the blazing fires at the mouth of the cave serving to throw their figures into bold relief.

He had leaned back, and, feigning sleep, hoped they might be betrayed into some unwitting confidence.

He had been utterly unable to ascertain how far Abdool was armed ; he concluded, indeed, from the habits of his people, that he would be

so, but doubted much his having fire-arms, and if not, he felt that he was a more equal match for him. Golab had already made up his mind that he had every violence to expect from his rage and disappointment; knew that he alone stood in the way between him and the success of his nefarious schemes, nor doubted that the obstacle would be soon removed: he kept himself, therefore, ready for the instant resistance of any attack.

Nor, indeed, had he been idle; while superintending the exterior arrangements, he had carefully surveyed the position of the caves, and their various approaches, so as to be prepared for the worst, and had also detached to Ada's interest, one of the bullock-drivers, who being, fortunately, a countryman of the same caste as himself, had a leaning to him; and who, on promise of a large reward, had pledged his assistance in case of need, so that Golab felt he was not so entirely abandoned to his own defence.

Abdool sat for hours without speaking, or even moving, save to replenish the exhausted

pipe ; it might have seemed, indeed, as if his whole faculties were engrossed in the occupation, so industriously did he maintain it, had not an occasional look towards Golab, and one so full of deadly hate, betrayed the contrary fact. Bappoo had ceased smoking, and had evidently succumbed to the fatigues of the day, and fallen asleep, and which his mighty snoring declared to be no feigned one.

At length, when Golab was nearly wearied out with watching, and scarcely able to keep his eyelids any longer open, Abdool laid down his pipe, crept cautiously to where he sat, and listened there eagerly.

Golab watched his every movement ; his knife was in his hand, and he was prepared to test his prowess with him in case of any attack, for Golab was both a brave and a powerful man ; but, after listening for some moments, Abdool returned to his place, and Golab saw that no mischief was intended him then.

Abdool had taken up the scabbard that he wore, and opening it, drew out, one by one, several arrows, which he dipped, separately, in a

small phial, that he carried about him, and, waving them about in the air to dry them, returned them carefully into the case. He again sat still for a long, weary time, and then creeping as before to Golab, scrutinized him even more narrowly ; and once Golab thought he saw his hand raised to strike him ; but he still flinched not, and presently Abdool passed noiselessly away from out the cave.

Instantly did Golab start to his feet, and cautiously watching him, saw that he went to give some secret orders to the bullock-drivers.

Golab lost no time, but groping his way past Bappoo as quietly as he could, felt for Abdool's scabbard, well knowing the quick death with which he had anointed the arrows ; he took them carefully out, and sucked off the poison, one by one. He knew that the virulent matter, though instantly fatal to the blood, was innocuous to the mouth.

In returning them, however, to the sheath, he let one fall, and Bappoo, quickly starting up, uttered some exclamation, unknown to Golab, who, at the moment, thought there was no

escape, but by taking Bappoo's life ; he, however, kept still, and Bappoo, mistaking him for his master, presently lay down again. He seemed, however, restless and wakeful, and Golab began to feel so altogether unbearable the extreme peril of his position, should Abdool return, that he determined, at any risk, to attempt his retreat.

Holding, therefore, his knife ready for instant use, he crept noiselessly past. Bappoo grunted as he passed him, looked gaping round ; Golab had promptly crouched on the ground ; the half-wakened man saw nothing—perhaps cared for nothing, at the moment—and, turning himself over, let the croucher safely by.

Golab had scarcely regained his former post, than he heard a light and muffled step creeping from his mistress' cave : it paused as it came to where he was, and then passed on to where Bappoo lay ; he saw at once it was the Ayah : how lucky he had secured his retreat !

The girl crept softly to her lover's side ; she

saw that he was alone—there was plenty of light to tell her that—and, quickly waking him, she began to talk earnestly to him ; but Golab, with all his acuteness of hearing, could only detect that they were talking about money, and disappointed plans ; as, also, that Bappoo would have left his master, had they not been somehow foiled.

“ Aha ! ” chuckled Golab, to himself, “ them not too much friend, then ! ”

But Abdool returned at this moment, and, seeing Ayah, asked her eagerly what tidings she had brought ; and the girl made him understand that all was quiet—no sign of any distrust—Missie fast asleep—had never stirred. Abdool seemed contented, and, sending her back with strong injunctions, which Bappoo repeated after him, to make them doubly sure, to bring him instant word, if any change took place ; he was preparing to lie down to sleep, when Golab, wishing to prolong the conference, and gain, perchance some further information, feigned as though he woke, stretching and yawning most vigorously.

There was an instant rush in the adjoining cave, and Golab saw that Ayah had crouched down by her lover's side, to escape detection. He, however, seemed not to notice them, but, getting to his feet, went to the mouth of the cave, spoke to the man on watch; stirred up the fires; stretched himself well out, and presently, again taking his former station, considerably revived by the exercise, soon seemed to be again lost in sleep.

"He sleep now," he heard Ayah say; "he great, nasty man!"

"No mind, Ayah," said Abdool, "come after to-morrow day, he will make great cry."

"He saw Missie this morning," she continued, "and had long talk with her: could not get to hear, they talk in whisper so."

"Don't take eye away, Ayah," Abdool replied; "no tell Missie you know: come to-morrow day—do what Abdool like—Golab kill by bits."

"The ugly wretch!" was Ayah's flattering remark.

"But go to Missie, Ayah," Abdool said; "if missie make stir, bring tell to me."

"That will I ; anything for such a nice man."

And Ayah crept quietly away, snapping her fingers as she passed Golab, as if to show the contempt in which she held him.

Abdool scarcely waited her withdrawal, than, throwing off his upper garment, and folding his rug about him, he cast himself on the ground, and soon slept most soundly.

But Golab still abated not his watch ; though, now, that all was so still and quiet, and he so exhausted with his persisted vigil, it was far more difficult to maintain his wakefulness ; he thought the morning dawn could not now be far away—prayed to Allah to hasten its coming, and still kept motionless.

It might be an hour afterwards, that he again heard Ayah's step approaching from the inner cave. She passed him warily as before, as he was snoring loudly enough to content the most jealous suspicion, crept on her tip-toes to where Bappoo lay, and cautiously waking him, urged him, by signs, to rise and accompany her. Bappoo rubbed his eyes, and, slowly raising himself up, they passed hand in hand away.

Golab again rose, watched them enter an adjoining cave, but quickly lost them there. The fires were now nearly out, so that it was no longer easy to distinguish objects at any distance. He looked round ; the first pale streak of morning seemed then to pencil the sky, and tell of another day.

What would that day bring forth ?

CHAPTER XI.

"I pray you, gentle Sir, a guerdon grant,
You cannot say me nay, and you gallant !
The very brutes, when beauty passes by,
Their savage natures yield submissively,
And you—"

MEANWHILE Ada had retired to her cot to rest her weary limbs, and fain would it had been, to soothe her wearied spirits. Little chance had she of sleep; even did not Golab's warning sound in her ears, the terrible peril—the horror of her situation, would have banished every idea, every wish for sleep; and the intensity of her thoughts have rendered it impossible. And she lay, hour after hour, listening, fearing, trembling.

Confident in Golab's faithfulness, as also

strangely trustful of his devising some means for her deliverance, she had not taken off any portion of her dress; alleging to Ayah, whom she now regarded as little better than a spy, the strangeness of her lodgment, and her superstitious dread of it: she had ordered her to keep a lamp burning, lest any wild creature should be hid about the cave; and, feigning presently as if she slept, resigned herself to the helplessness of her situation.

She had lain for hours in this painful wakefulness, and, at length, her mere physical exhaustion was inducing a kind of dreamy confusedness, in which all kinds of horrible imaginations distressed her; when she was suddenly roused to consciousness by Ayah's slowly raising herself, as on the former night, and having satisfied herself that her mistress slept, creeping slowly from the cave.

Calculating that she would not return very briefly, Ada quickly rose, and selecting such articles of clothing as would be indispensable, should any sudden and stealthy flight be necessary, she made up a more portable package

to provide for the possibility ; and, again locking up her trunks, so as to prevent any notion of her preparations becoming known to Ayah, she then quietly regained her cot, long before the girl returned from her first wandering, and without her even suspecting she had been observed.

She crept to her mistress, leaned closely over her—so closely, indeed, that Ada could hear her breathing ; her pulse beat quickly ; she almost feared some outrage at her hands ; but, after listening for some moments, the girl again retired, and sinking down on her mat, kept so still and quiet, that Ada would have deemed she really slept, but for an occasional movement of her lips, as if from parched thirst, which, to her quick ear, betrayed to the contrary.

She still watched her through her half-closed eyelids ; luckily, the lamp, feeble as its wasting light was now, threw what rays it had full on Ayah's face, and showed her movements to Ada, while she herself was cast into the shade ; and she could distinguish, every now and then, the wandering of a sleepless and impatient eye, as it seemed to search the denser darkness of the

cave's opening. A long, heavy hour passed, and Ada, in a perfect fever of suspense, before Ayah again rose, and apparently satisfied that her mistress slept, crept warily away.

It was no small relief to Ada to be released from her persisted surveillance; she seemed to breathe more freely: no longer constrained to act a part that cramped her movements so wretchedly, it seemed perfectly luxury to rise and give free motion to her limbs.

She had been so occupied for some minutes, and had now passed beyond the temporary curtain which protected her couch, when she saw a man's figure crouching at the cave's entrance: the lamp had nigh gone out, and but gave that flickering, uncertain light, which showed things imperfectly, and at intervals; but she had seen enough—too surely did she distinguish Abdool's tunic: she stood paralyzed with terror.

She was standing at one side of the cave, at the moment, apart from where the intruder was crouching, and she was yet unseen: she could not cry out, for her agitation choked her: she

could not fly from the outrage—alas ! where could she fly ?—it seemed as if a dark and terrible chasm yawned before her—oh ! that she might have plunged into it !—have ceased to be ! And Howard, where was he ? where was he, not to protect her in that fearful moment ? She groaned his name once, and was rushing distractedly away, for the forlorn hope of rescue, when Golab's well-known voice stayed her :

“ Missie ! Missie ! ” he called out, cautiously.

Salvation might have come to her ! for a moment the rescue was too overpowering ; but it was not a time to yield to weakness ; her whole soul seemed to spring to her support ; she answered Golab in the same cautious whisper ; her spirit blessed him as her saviour !

When she, after years and years had passed by, and memory had lost the traces of many of her trials, fearful as they were ; when it was her lot to count over many happy hours, and recall feelings the most exquisite, but as a faded past ; never did the vividness of that moment of ecstasy lose one iota of its sharpness ; it

seemed impressed upon her brain, in colours no time could change.

"Missie," said Golab, as, discovering where she was, he rose from the ground, and approached close to her, "time done come—Missie run now?"

"I am quite prepared, Golab," Ada said, as well as her agitation would suffer her.

"Hush! Missie no speak!" quickly Golab cautioned her. "See, Missie!" and he held before the lamp some articles of dress he had brought with him, "Golab, Abdool—Missie must make one bullock-driver."

And simply waiting for her to understand, he proceeded to fold a turban on her head, and enshroud her in a long, light jacket, that reached below her knees, completely covering her person.

"Now, Missie," he whispered, "make walk like bullock-driver, and follow Golab."

Ada pointed to the bundle she had prepared; Golab slung it in the curtain sheet round him, and moved onward.

As he came to the outer mouth of the cave,

he suddenly paused, peering anxiously through the feeble light, and intently listening for many moments; he then stepped back, and again whispered:

"Ayah done taken Bappoo there," pointing to the adjoining cave; "them still talk. Missie, don't 'fraid; be sure walk after Golab very close;" and he stepped boldly on, with a gait certainly not very unlike Abdool's.

Ada drew in her breath, struggled for a moment with her weakness, and followed after him.

Golab went steadily onward, although Bappoo, on hearing his step, came peeping out of the cave to watch him by; and when Ada passed, he held her by the sleeve, whispering a few words in his own language. The horror of that moment! She felt that it was one of rescue, or misery: she violently pulled her arm away, and went on. Bappoo evidently calling some opprobrious names after her. The faint, however, succeeded; it was plain that he thought his master passed by to give some orders to the bullock-driver; for he at once retired, and Ada, ere she had turned the angle of the rock,

heard him speaking to Ayah in less measured accents.

Golab, however, hurried on for some minutes before her, as if careless of her following him. The dawn was coming faintly on ; she could, however, still, but see the dim outline of his figure, as he passed along ; but for Abdool's white tunic, she had almost failed to keep him in sight.

Suddenly, however, he stopped, panting with agitation and excitement :

"Allah be praised !" he exclaimed, as she came up to him ; "I thought all over with Missie, when bad Bappoo done come—thank Allah !"

"I am so faint, Golab," indeed Ada could scarcely support herself, "I fear I have not the power to go on."

"Missie make happy," said Golab, hurriedly ; "but Golab must carry Missie now—hide foot-mark," and, taking her in his arms, he crossed to some little distance from the cave, and, turning in the opposite direction to that which he had at first taken, and which was in

fact the way to the village spoken of by Abdool ; he ran with her, as fast as his strength would permit him, for nearly half a mile, when, turning from the road, he hurried along a path that led up the mountain side. He never spoke—indeed he was far too much out of breath to be able to do so ; but, presently stopping, he placed Ada on the ground, carefully supporting her, even while his heart panted like a hunted hare.

“Missie safe now—rock no tell footmark—him think gone village—Missie make self happy.”

“How can I ever repay you, Golab ?” said Ada, her heart swelling with gratitude.

“Never mind pay, Missie,” Golab replied, hastily ; “still much to do. Missie can walk now ?”

“Oh, yes, Golab,” Ada spoke earnestly ; “I can breathe now : lead on.”

“Missie make self happy,” said Golab, as he went forward.

He had not, however, gone any great distance, and they were turning among some rocks on

their path, when, to Ada's surprise, she saw one of the bullocks waiting with his driver, evidently for their coming.

"All right, Ruttum Mullee?" asked Golab.

"Yes, master," the man replied; "safe got up rock—no one see."

Golab had noticed the path the night before, and, learning from Ruttum Mullee, who fortunately belonged to the village they had last passed, that it led over the hills to a town in the distant north, he had sent him off by a circuitous route, over the naked rock indeed, so as to avoid all possible trace of their foot-marks, to wait for him at any convenient spot on the regular path; a duty, which, though attended with much risk from the prowling beasts of prey about, he had happily accomplished.

To place Ada on the bullock's back, supported on the provender which it carried, and such portion of her equipment as had luckily not been taken into the cave, was the work of a moment; and the party went instantly forward, hurrying on the beast as quickly as their rugged and steep path permitted them.

They had advanced for nearly an hour in silence, each too much occupied by anxious apprehension of pursuit to speak, when a sudden exclamation from Golab caused them to look round. He quickly lifted Ada from her uneasy saddle, and with Ruttum Mullee's help, throwing the beast on its side, kept it down, all crouching round as closely as they could.

Golab had pointed to the road below, where Bappoo was seen riding slowly along, evidently scrutinizing the path, for some trace of the fugitives: no doubt their flight had been discovered.

"Ah, you too much bad man!" Golab called out in derision. "Make Missie wife! Kill Golab by bits—eh?"

Bappoo, however, did not go very far away; but, gaining an elevation on the road, he stood for some time, looking about in all directions, and failing of any satisfaction—the fugitives were safely enough hid in the underwood, he slowly retraced his steps, and was soon lost to their view.

"Now must get on, Missie, plenty fast,"

Golab said, again lifting her on her uneasy seat. "Ruttum Mullee better run than fight, Missie."

Indeed, the visible terror depicted on the man's countenance, declared that, in case of pursuit, they had little aid to expect from his very small portion of courage.

It was already broad daylight, and Golab sought eagerly to place as great a space between them and any chance of pursuit as was possible, before the full heat arrested their progress.

He said little beyond urging Ruttum Mullee to better speed, continually looking back on their track with an anxious, fearful eye, that made Ada tremble to observe; especially when Golab's agitated looks and sudden alarm seemed so evidently to declare some increased apprehension.

He plainly saw some object moving in their track. It was too distant to distinguish what it really was; but supposing, as was too probable, that their path had been discovered, and their pursuers were actually tracing them, their horses' greater speed left them no chance of avoidance,

but by plunging into the thicket, and abandoning their bullock and baggage.

A dreary rescue such as that, with all its risks and desolateness, their very hearts shrank from attempting, as long as a hope of better escape was left.

They were then entering a somewhat thick jungle, where they might hide themselves securely enough, were they compelled to resort to such a step; and, pausing there, Golab climbed one of the large trees, to reconnoitre more distinctly; while Ada and Ruttum Mullee quickly selected a portion of the bullock's burthen for their sustenance, in case of the worst.

After, however, a long and anxious scrutiny, Golab discovered that the cause of their alarm was some huge animal on the mountain side; and, assured of their comparative safety, they loaded the bullock afresh, and more conveniently for Ada's comfort.

An exchange was also made in her outer garment, Ruttum Mullee's being returned to its owner, who certainly required it; and Ada, adopting the one of which Golab had eased Abdool,

which, being of the finest muslin, served to disguise, without incommoding her.

They again pursued their way, still anxiously enough, but with less of apprehension; and, at length, at the verge of the long jungle, topped the mountain height, when a long, dreary descent lay before them, without one sign of any human habitation.

Cheerless indeed was such a prospect; but they were all thankful enough to have attained it safely—too thankful not to rejoice, though doubt and uncertainty still encompassed them.

“Plenty proper, master,” said Ruttum Mullee, seeing that Golab looked uncertainly round him; “see him tomb a little way got,” pointing to a ruined building about half a mile off; “much good well there.”

“Very place for Missie to stop,” said Golab; “we there no time.”

“Go on, go on,” said Ada, who could scarcely sustain herself any longer. In fact, her long and fearful trial, her want of sleep, and long fast, for so far she had been too excited and too

much engrossed in their flight to feel her exhaustion, began to tell upon her frame, and she felt it was impossible to bear up more.

And glad she was, when, on reaching the so-called tomb, she was lifted off her uneasy seat, and placed in a cool and somewhat commodious recess therein, rendered still more cool by the feathery cassarino trees by which it was surrounded.

Ada was surprised to find how clean the interior of the tomb was: in spite of its secluded and desolate neighbourhood, it might have been continually used for a lodgment, though Ruttum Mullee insisted that no one came that path: it was years since even he had been, whose life was spent in driving his bullocks far and near.

A general unpacking now commenced, and such provisions as they had brought with them were soon displayed to more than one famished eye.

"Missie now eat," Golab earnestly entreated his mistress, who lay almost fainting with exhaustion. "Done gone too long. Come, Missie."

"Water, water," Ada said, faintly.

"Where well, Ruttum Mullee?" he asked, eagerly ; and the two went apart to seek it.

And, as Ada lay thinking of her escape with a prayerful heart, listening to the murmuring of the casserinos, so like the creeping of the wave on the sea-shore, a peaceful calm came over her, that made her, for the moment, forget the disquiet, the peril of her position.

She was suddenly startled by a low sigh, almost close to where she lay : she looked quickly round.

Upon the ground, immediately before the tomb, an object met her sight, that soon rivetted her attention.

A miserable-looking man, seemingly in the last stage of existence, was kneeling in a supplicating attitude. He was covered with rags, and which evidently bore the vestiges of more countries than one. His face was marked with deep scars ; his hands, which he held before his breast, mutilated and emaciated ; his hair clotted with filth.

Ada had barely time to make these observa-

tions, than the man groaned out, in a perfectly English accent :

“ Pity ! pity ! for the love of heaven ! ”

Ada’s astonishment to hear her native tongue under such strange circumstances, was so extreme, that she instantly raised herself up, in spite of her exhaustion, and asked the man, who, whence he was ?

No sooner, however, did he hear her voice, than a loud cry burst from him, and he fell senseless to the ground.

At this moment, Golab luckily returned with the bag of water, and throwing some, by his mistress’ orders, over the stranger’s face, the fainting man slowly recovered ; but scarcely had he opened his eyes, than an evident terror convulsed him. He looked fearfully from Golab to Ruttum Mullee, and as he saw their native dress and dark complexions, he said, beseechingly :

“ Do not, do not torture me ! ”

“ We not torture, man,” said Golab, “ we better like do good.”

The stranger still looked, wildly, inquiringly round him.

"Where are you from?" Ada asked kindly.

To see how the poor wretch started at the sound of her voice, the rapture with which he listened to it! Surely it must be well at times to suffer, if but to know the bliss that comes with deliverance!

"Hush! hush!" he said, wildly, "an angel speaks!"

"Yes," said Golab, very gallantly, "Missie enough angel: that plenty true."

"Who are you?" Ada inquired, as she came nearer to him.

He gazed on her for some moments in speechless delight, ere he faintly answered:

"An Englishman, sweet lady—escaped from cruel slavery;" his voice sunk to a whisper, "I have not tasted food for now two days."

"Give him some bread, Golab," said Ada earnestly, "is there not wine?"

"Just drop for Missie," said Golab with a ruthless countenance, shaking the only bottle they had with them.

"Let him have a little, Golab; see, he is nearly gone; he wants it more than I."

"Too good Missie!" said Golab, as he complied with her directions.

The man soon revived under their kind treatment, and being left to himself, while the rest refreshed themselves, it was interesting to observe the intense delight, the uninterrupted fixedness with which he continued to gaze on Ada, as if he feared lest, once his eye withdrawn, he might lose the blessed sight.

When, however, their repast was at an end, and the continued rest and quietude had restored the spirits of the party, and the stranger also seemed to have recruited considerably under their generous care; Ada had a rude kind of couch prepared for her within the ruin, and yielding to her long fatigue, slept soundly for many hours.

Calm and refreshing was her sleep — her dreams, of happy things: now an angel seemed to bear her up from the rush of some fierce, ravening beast: now Howard stood palpably before her in the midst of blessedness; he held his arms open to welcome her, and called her his joy! his bliss!

But she was suddenly disturbed from such fond imaginations to the less pleasurable reality : Golab had wakened her.

“ Missie, Missie,” he said, “ please open eyes —such thing !”

CHAPTER XII.

"A cat had got a mouse into her claws,
Did she not mar it with her odious paws ?
A grip she gave it ev'ry now and then,
And pitch'd it up, and caught the wretch again ;
Nor did she seem to know what time to stay,
So long as life was left to test the play."

ADA might naturally be surprised at Golab's exclamation.

"Well, Golab," she answered, as soon as she could collect herself.

"Strange man, Englishman, Missie ; him kept slave by bad tyrant at Bohkara much long time."

"He seems very ill, Golab."

"Almost dead when Missie came ; done eat nothing for many days. Missie see hands ?"

"Yes, Golab ; they seem maimed, injured."

"Eaten by rats, Missie ; done put him in deep well filled with rats : eat him nose, eat him fingers."

"Horrible !" Ada exclaimed : "can such monsters exist ? But what are we to do with him, Golab ? We cannot leave him to die."

"Missie never think of taking him with us ?" Golab said, earnestly ; "he cannot walk."

"We must not leave him to perish, Golab."

"Must take care of Missie first," said Golab, doggedly, "still long way to go—bullock never carry two."

"It is very awkward, Golab ; but let me see him, bring him here."

And Golab very presently brought the stranger before his mistress.

He looked wonderfully better for his refreshment : had already washed himself, and materially improved the outer aspect of his scanty garments, probably by such small contributions as Golab could spare him : he walked too more firmly, and the hope of rescue had given life to his sunken eyes.

As he came before Ada, he fell on his knees and prayed God's blessing on her for his preservation—for his escape from a lingering and certain death."

"Rise! rise!" said Ada kindly, "I am glad to have been of service. You are escaping from captivity?"

"Yes, lady," he looked round with such a fearful gaze, as if yet uncertain he was safe; "from one of the most cruel kind. I have been kept now so many years, that I cannot at times believe I count them rightly; and subjected to horrors, as even still make my blood curdle to think of."

"And for what crime?" asked Ada.

"Truly, lady, for none; the tyrant thought we had some secret which might assist his schemes: and thinking to force it from us, made us work as slaves in the burning sun without clothes, scarcely with food, and that little of the vilest kind: and this failing to gain his end, he put us into deep and noxious dungeons, keeping us one by one, amid such horrors as would sicken your very heart to listen to. See

these scars upon my face, these mutilated hands! the hungry rats that swarmed that fearful well, gnawed them thus when I had fainted for very agony."

"Poor soul!" Ada said compassionately, "I wonder that you kept your reason."

"Reason, lady! I have been mad, have vainly dashed myself against the rocky ground, and wildly railed against my God, that he did not grant my prayer to die—may God forgive me! but I was, indeed, beside myself. I could not lie down, and I dared not sleep, for the greedy vermin disputed life with me, and 'twas all my waking care could do to keep them at bay. I had but a small bit of mouldy bread, each morning, thrown into the filth around me, and in spite of my hunger, my disgust was such, that I often sickened at the thought of touching it. I was parched with thirst, and I could only quench it with even more foul disgust! I had need gone mad! My poor companion, than whom a kinder, a nobler spirit, never lived! he could not bear his sufferings; indeed, I wondered not!—he had strangled himself, how, I never learnt. I

could not strangle *myself*, at least, I knew *that*, or I had long since done it."

"Still you escaped?" Ada asked.

"The tyrant, lady, feared that I too might elude his rage; so far he had thought to wring the secret from my friend; but now, he being beyond his power, he feared to lose, with me, all chance of satisfaction. He had me taken from the horrid dungeon; had me cleansed and fed, and barely waiting for my tardy recovery, tortured me afresh. He knew that death was mercy; remembered my horror of my former dungeon, and had me again thrown there amid all the disgust which it contained. The next morning I was a maniac, nor knew till afterwards, that my tormentor had had me promptly taken out, lest death should rob him of his victim. 'Twas then, the thought of flight occurred to me. I had recovered my reason, but I dissembled with my keepers, and succeeded in establishing their belief of my confirmed lunacy."

"How you must have suffered!" Ada again spake. "And you escaped?"

"After years of suspense, lady, they had ceased to notice me ; the tyrant had found other objects to glut his cruelty ; and but for a lingering hope, that even yet I might feel his vengeance, had ordered my destruction. But at length I found a long watched-for opportunity of evading my keepers, and one dark night I fled. What I had to endure in my flight, the deprivations, the hindrances, perils, would take days to tell ; but at length, I passed the confines of that cursed land, and after weeks of anxious peril—of peril in almost every shape, a Persian merchant brought me on to this deserted spot, where he left me sick, without almost a hope of rescue. I had lain for hours listening to the moan of the trees, as the wind crept through them, and my wandering mind thought that an angel whispered me from this state of suffering, when you approached ; an angel had indeed come to save, a very angel's voice spoke to me."

"And whence are you ?" Ada asked : "where seek to go ?"

"My home was at Bombay."

"Bombay!" Ada exclaimed, "we are from thence. Have you friends there?"

"I went this ill-fated journey on behalf of a Mr. McGregor of that place."

"Is it possible?" Ada exclaimed: "and your name?"

"Newbery!"

"George Newbery?" Ada inquired. "How strange to meet you thus!—poor Maria! how delighted she will be to hear of this."

"May I believe my senses?" he asked, wildly; "speak you of my wife?"

"Yes," Ada said, "I know her well: she is a kind and faithful friend."

"And does she still live—still love me?" he asked, eagerly, as the full tear trembled in his eye, and he heard the many particulars of Maria's unceasing regret, her confidence of again seeing him. They were indeed words of comfort—it was like manna in the wilderness, that gave assurance of a protecting providence over the events of this life. And long and many were the inquiries and answers which passed between

them, until Golab, pointing to the declining sun, came to urge their renewed progress.

"But I have found a friend, Golab," Ada said: "you remember Maria, this is her lost husband, Golab."

"True that you tell Missie!" exclaimed Golab, "and Missie want take him?"

"Yes, Golab, how can we manage?"

"Sometime he walk?" said Golab, inquiringly. "Ruttum Mullee, tell them large cave about three hour walk."

"I can well manage that," Newbery said.

"We will do better," Ada said: she saw that they were yet too near the scene of their recent escape to safely light up fires for the night's rest; but learning that the new cave was on another side of the mountain, she determined to make it their resting-place, sending on to the town, which would then be more accessible, for better equipage. And they at once went on, in better spirits indeed, for there was now small fear of molestation from Abdool; and all seemed to feel they had met with deliverance; but still slow and difficult was their advance; for, as neither Ada,

nor her new friend could walk very fast, and only one could ride at a time, they were sadly delayed ; and the brief twilight came so rapidly, that Golab, as the conductor of the party, and now, in his own estimation of his position, the responsible agent of his mistress' safety, began to feel great apprehension of being benighted, before the cave could be attained.

Ruttum Mullee, too, was evidently puzzled, though he still maintained his knowledge of the path ; still affirmed that he was right.

Ada began to tremble at the idea of a night exposure to the cold and dews, and the hundred noxious things about her : Newbery was loud in his regrets, that their care for him had risked the safety of the party, begging again and again to be abandoned to his fate. All seemed going on wrong, for the dusk was on them ; very soon they would be unable to proceed at all.

At this moment, Golab, who had been a few paces in advance, endeavouring, if possible, even yet to discover the wished-for cave, came running back in great fright ; he had heard the bark of many wolves from the wood close before them ; it was madness to attempt to proceed.

They were opposite one of the Tallipot palm-trees, whose large projecting flat branches, extending for several yards from the trunk, so closely matted with leaves as to form an impervious shelter from the sun's rays; when found by the road-sides—a common occurrence enough, are eagerly sought by travellers, accommodating twenty and thirty persons at a time.

It was immediately decided to adopt its protection, and fires were quickly lighted up to scare away their more imminent danger. This done, the next object was to prepare some kind of a couch for Ada: rude enough, indeed, a mere mat laid upon dry leaves, over which a sort of canopy was formed with the sheet they had luckily brought. And here Ada reclined herself, if not for sleep, at least for the resting of her weary limbs. While of the others, two, in turn, remained awake to keep the fires, and see that all was right.

It was a long, and sad, and anxious night; at least to Ada it was such, worn out as she was by trial and undue exertion. Now that the excitement was over, and she could think calmly of her escape,

of her extreme peril, of its strange avoidance, she felt almost doubtful of the reality of her position ; till, looking from her couch, unusual as it was even to her late extraordinary wanderings, she saw the dark figures moving about her, doubly strange in the fierce light of the blazing fires. Oh ! would Howard not love her the more for her sufferings, and her perils ! would he not welcome her, when he knew her devotion, her constancy of love for him, and all that it had cost her to reach him ! Had he known how much that cost was—could he have seen her then, shut up as she was in a wilderness, “with perils thick around her,” would he still be gay ? still the merriest of the merry ? Poor Ada ! Edith’s words had goaded her more than she liked to own, even to herself.

She did not know, indeed, that her letter had ever reached him : the probabilities, perhaps, were against the fact : he might not even know that she had followed him, but he must have known of their parted love ; the sting of separation, which had so miserably probed hers, must surely have touched his heart too ? And yet,

all who had seen him, concurred in the same ungracious epithet, "that merry man!"

Ada could not, would not know man's cold, heartless feelings in all their selfishness; she had yet much to learn, much that her own warm, generous nature—her woman's soul had scorned to think was possible.

But the morning came on in time, and with the earliest break of day, Ruttum Mullee went forward on foot to the yet distant town, to bring horses to meet them, while they followed on with the bullock and his burthen at such pace as circumstances permitted.

They had made nearly two hours' progress, when Ruttum Mullee rejoined them with sufficient horses for the whole party; and Ada was thankful to find herself soon in a large town, with well-furnished bazaars, which promised ample opportunity of replacing such necessities as she had been obliged to abandon in her flight from Abdool.

It was fortunate for Ada that Ruttum Mullee had been able to secure a very tolerable lodgment, which, with the aid of the bazaars, they

had made a comfortable resting-place for her. Her indisposition had increased upon her, and compelled her to pause. Indeed, but for Newbery's knowledge of medicine her ailment might have proved most serious. And Ada trembled to think of any protracted illness in her present circumstances.

As it was, a mere detention of two or three days was all the mischief, and the time was really needed to make the preparations for their renewed journey; and in which Ada found the greatest comfort in her new friend's assistance. Naturally of a shrewd, clever mind, he had not contended with a seven years' captivity, without gaining great insight into the habits and feelings of the people, and also attaining great expertness in accomplishing a variety of handiwork of the most incongruous description. He had, too, learnt the Affghan language sufficiently well to pass himself off as a native, which was of advantage many ways.

Among other things he had heard of a Cabool merchant-hawker, who was on his return journey to the capital; and with Ada's consent, pro-

posals were made by Golab, so as not to give offence to his jealous interest in his mistress, or do any despite to his own self-importance as her protector, for their accompanying him.

He was an old, white-bearded Mussulman, of a very Israelitish, money-making cast of countenance: glad to do anything for the lucre's sake.

So that Golab had small difficulty in agreeing with the man, when he had but to name his own terms to be acceded to; though being of the same faith, Golab could better talk him down into some kind of moderation: and Ada had, at least, a better prospect of escaping the rock, on which their former arrangements had been wrecked; as it was little likely that any possible admiration could urge on his ancient blood into anything so turbulent as Abdool's violence.

One great advantage which he offered them, was his having regular stopping-places on the route, and his ability to provide convenient lodgment for the party.

So the bargain was struck: he travelled with camels, but would supply elephants for the com-

mencement of the journey ; would go on without stopping in the way of his trade, and reach Cabool within the fortnight : he would be prepared to start on the following evening.

“ And now ! ” thought Ada, as they told her of the arrangements, “ at length my suspense will come to an end ! ”

CHAPTER XIII.

“ A lordly frog he was, swell’d out
Into an enormous roundabout ;
And when he croak’d, ’twas with an air
That made the common people stare :
An ancient frog, forsooth, and knew
What time the worms would sip the dew ;
Full well might he important be
Who’d pick’d up such rotundity.”

RAMASAMY, as the travelling merchant was called, had been in the habit of traversing the country round ever since his youth. He had originally been one of the workers of the fine jewellery for which Cabool is celebrated ; it had been his practice to collect as much as he could together, with a stock of the beautiful shawls of the country ; and, journeying with

them to Hindostan, traverse nearly its whole extent ; and, taking back a return stock of English goods, found customers at either end of his circuit, that had soon enabled him to amass an ample fortune.

And Ramasamy was a rich and a very great man in his way ; very fond of making money, holding it legitimate to do so whenever or however ingenuity permitted him : a very good follower of the Prophet, indeed Mahomet could not have asked for a more zealous disciple. At the same time, Ramasamy was tolerably self-sufficient, as a certain toss of the head, and its amplified breadth at its posterior elevation, together with a very contracted expression of his eye, amply declared. He was very important in his manner, very silent and irascible ; very small in his person, but enormously fat, and somewhat bent by age. But he was rich ! had plenty of mammon, that universal winner of hearts ! and he was respected, looked up to as a very deity.

When all had been prepared for the journey, not forgetting a fresh Ayah to replace her late

worthless one, Ada sent for Newbery, and generously offered him the means for his return to Bombay.

But he at once refused her kindness :

“ Ask me not to leave you,” he said, “ until I have seen you safe. You have saved my life ; let me, in part, recompense your kindness, by protecting yours in this lawless land. You have need of faithful hearts in such a pilgrimage as this.”

“ I can depend upon Golab, Newbery,” Ada answered. “ You have already suffered enough—are perhaps even yet not safe from your persecutor. Your wife, too, ought not to be kept longer in her affliction.”

“ I have thought of all, dear lady. Maria will but remain a few weeks longer in her suspense ; I know she will gladly suffer it for the object which it gains. I know she would sacrifice all personal feelings to benefit one, whose generous care has delivered me from destruction. I may not quit you, so long as I can aid your safety.”

“ Perhaps you are right,” Ada said. “ I have

felt the want of protection ; to think there was but one kind heart between me and misery."

Newbery looked especially pleased with her concurrence, and Ada was equally content to think it was by her doing he had been rescued—to think she should be the means of making one happy who had been such a friend to her.

When evening came, the cavalcade set off ; Ada and the Ayah in the one howdah ; Newbery and Golab, with Ramasamy, in the other ; so that, with his coolies and the camel-drivers, they formed a tolerably numerous party.

Ada had never before been on an elephant's back, and though the motion, at first, was rather inconvenient, very similar, in its effects, to those of a sea-voyage, yet she soon got accustomed to it ; found the fatigue comparatively small ; while her delight to find their daily progress nearly doubling her former speed, made her indifferent, almost unconseious of discomfort.

She was much amused to see the importance of their conductor, as he sat in his mountains of fat and his cushions, on the back seat of the howdah, on an elephant almost as important as

himself, and certainly with very much of the same stolid expression of countenance. But, with all his pomposity, he made good progress ; found them the convenient resting-places he had talked of, nor did any occasion of complaint occur amongst them.

Ramasamy, however, was a very Affghan—treacherous and deceitful—with strong feelings against English interference in the national affairs. Notwithstanding his habitual taciturnity, he had managed to let Golab, who was lamentably wanting in prudence, tell him the particulars of Ada's wanderings, and their object, as far as he knew ; and he seemed, for a space, to view her with less favour in consequence.

He had already explained to them, during their long rides, that Abdool had systematically taken them apart from any principal town, even on his altered route, by ways little frequented, so as to keep them away from any chance betrayal of his treachery.

By doing so, however, he had saved them from much annoyance ; insult indeed, even outrage it had been at times ; which would have met

them on their intended route, by which the military had gone before.

Such was the excitement, he had been told, that the villagers had risen against the stragglers, and in many instances murdered them.

Had not Ramasamy been such a regular traveller in Hindostan, and feared that any foul play might be known, and probably revisited on on him with interest, his bigotted spirit might, perhaps, have led him to some open treachery: it was not, indeed, until after a whole day's close meditation, that he seemed to have arrived at some better feeling; it might be that mammon had been at work, and he had calculated that he would be better paid by the due fulfilment of his contract: doubting, perhaps, how the means of paying for the journey could be forthcoming, until it was accomplished: for Ada's judicious concealment of her money had more than once stood her in good account.

Whatever the deciding motive might be, he however thawed from his previous apathy towards them; and, on approaching the next large town on their route, he urged their adopting

the native dresses and habits, as far as was practicable, so as to prevent any undue notice to the party.

A change, indeed, in their habiliments had become needful, from their now considerable advance to the north; and their high elevation, many thousand feet above the level of the sea, on which their road lay. The suggestion, therefore, was fully complied with; and a very suspicious eye indeed would have failed to distinguish the nationality of the travellers.

His caution was soon proved to be no unwise one, for both Newbery and Golab heard enough in their needful commerce with the natives, to be assured of the strong resentment against the English, which ruled them, and which thirsted for some object on which to sate itself.

They had now recovered the route the troops had gone, and continually were traces to be seen of their having passed: broken waggons, abandoned ammunition; accoutrements, and broken cooking vessels, with the blackened stones, the temporary fire-places on which they had cooked

their meals ; in places, almost lining the road-side in hundreds.

They were again travelling on horseback, and although Ramasamy's fat sides could not get on quite so well, as when disposed at his ease, in his howdah ; it was surprising to see how well the energetic old man managed to trot on.

They were now approaching the ancient city of Ghuznee, once the capital of a mighty Emperor ; not many years ago that of the Affghan dominions : now a comparatively deserted place to what it was, though still large and populous.

They were scarcely seventy miles from Cabool, and their narrowing distance was sufficiently declared by the increased excitement and turbulent spirit, which, notwithstanding that the place was garrisoned by British troops, seemed so rife about them.

Scarcely, indeed, had they established themselves in their lodgment, than there was a loud and furious cry about them ; and then Ramasamy's voice was heard, as if it were expostulating.

Golab looked much alarmed: a furious mob had sought to know if any English were among the party: Ramasamy had seemed to do his best to persuade them in the negative; and yet they lingered by the place, too evidently disposed to mischief.

It was not that Ada feared for her own safety; as she felt, from the old man's evidently increasing liking for her—whether for her own sake or for some of his sordid, calculating motives, she had yet to learn—he would be sure to screen her. He had lately taken notice of Golab's peon's badge, and hearing from him that his mistress belonged to a real English judge, had viewed her thenceforward with almost absurd deference.

It happened that some of his best customers lived in the Madras district, and he seemed to have a very exalted idea of the judicial power. Some internal deductions from such a connection might probably move Ramasamy, for he was ever ready to turn all events to advantage; and it was certain enough, that, as far as he could protect her, she herself was safe.

But not so Newbery, who she greatly feared, in spite of his sunburnt skin and very native appearance, might still be detected as one of the proscribed English, and come to peril. The unmistakable evidence, too, of the hostile spirit, which had been roused, made her most anxious as to her further progress.

The disturbance had scarcely subsided, when Ramasamy came to them, apparently much perturbed; would give any money, to find an Englishman among the party—*any* money! and he not only repeated the word, but gave a very decided emphasis on the quantity.

“Are you not to have enough?” Newbery asked him, in his own language, deciding, at once, that he was seeking to take advantage of the alarm, well knowing how greatly it had disturbed them; “you had your own price.”

“Yes,” he said, discontentedly, “get plenty more by telling.”

Ada asked the interpretation of his words.

“Tell him,” she said, “if he but takes us

safely, that my friends shall pay him handsomely, even more than he thinks."

Newbery reluctantly communicated Ada's words, and the old miser moved himself away.

"I do not like the man," Newbery said, "there is a quiet peering into one, even while he seems to be in a torpid state, that troubles me much; I am sure he bears us no goodwill; is only restrained by the expected reward from doing us mischief."

"You are fanciful, my friend," Ada replied; "but, at all events, he *is* restrained."

"So far," Newbery said, "I cannot at all understand his great notice of Golab; did I not know that the good fellow is beyond all tampering, I should suspect some treachery."

"Golab a traitor, Newbery! I would sooner doubt my own existence than his truth!"

"I know it, dear lady; do not think me ungenerous to Golab, but there are certain private conferences going on between them, which I cannot unravel."

"What kind of conferences, Newbery?"

"I have not liked to name it; nor would I

yet, but I fancy Golab is jealous of me ; and I attribute the feeling as much to some strange influence, which this Ramasamy has over him, as to any fancied preference you may show me."

"Golab is certainly of a most jealous temper," Ada spoke, musingly ; "but it would be impossible for me to doubt his attachment : he is a simple-minded man, a little too fond of gossip, and perhaps the old merchant is playing with his weakness."

"I wish I could think it was nothing more ; perhaps I am wrong."

At this moment, the object of their conversation entered the room.

"Please, Missie," he said, very warmly, "what think ? old man made rabble fright Missie."

"What do you mean, Golab ?" and she looked significantly at Newbery.

"He people sent to cry English, and make Missie 'fraid."

"No, no, Golab ; don't take any wrong fancies into your head."

"Done tell true, Missie," Golab seemed affronted, "I see him give pice, and say, go English cry."

"He is a great rogue, Golab," Newbery said; "it is all to get more money."

"I think him rogue too," Golab said, looking very knowingly; "him very odd; don't like you, Master Newbery, bit; too proud for him."

"Indeed, Golab! how proud?"

"Wont tell him nothing, Master Newbery; and him vex much."

"Oh! that is what he calls proud?"

"Yes! Master Newbery, same thing he think."

"I hope, Golab," his mistress asked, "that you are proud in the same way, and don't tell him too much?"

"Ah! I know who tell Missie that," his spirit was roused, "he make mischief, Master Newbery, and tell Missie bad things."

"Don't be foolish, Golab; Newbery would not do anything of the sort, and I am sure I would not listen to him if he did."

"But how could Missie tell that?" the jealous spirit was still rife.

"I tell nothing," Ada said soothingly, "I only ask the question; and wish to caution you not to be too communicative: you cannot be too wary."

"I know who tell Missie that," and he gave Newbery a look of no very pleased expression, as he left the room.

"We seem to be getting into troubled waters, my friend," Ada said, as Golab quitted them: "surely I must be doomed to trouble."

"Trust to me, dear lady, I will win him round; but right or not with this Golab, you have one true heart with you."

"That at least, I know," and Ada sighed; "but if Golab prove dishonest, I will indeed think there is no more trust in human nature!"

Trouble and doubt! thought Ada, trouble and doubt! On what a restless sea had she been tossed! what a life of disquietude had been hers ever since her first acquaintance with Howard! yet and yet had the storm gathered round her,

deepening in density as it came, until very destruction seemed inevitable.

Trouble and doubt! they seemed her very nature now: as familiar companions whom mere habit had reconciled, however ungracious they might be. Trouble and doubt! when would they—would they ever end?

Yes! and it was Ada's fortitude, her comfort in her trials and her wanderings; now—oh! she hardly dared to think how soon, they would be no more: suspense no longer torture her; but the full reward of her constancy have come. That thought indeed was too exquisite to dwell upon, although it was beyond her power to forbid it.

Now that the time drew so near—was it possible that in three days more she should see him, for whose sake she had suffered so much, and been a wanderer from home, and love, and peace for now quite seven months, amid dangers at which her heart quailed to think upon, and disquietudes that would have borne down a less devoted spirit? Now that the time was near—'twas like the eager racer pressing

to the goal—no other thought in mind—no past, no present moved her; there was but the one vivid hope, that goal to win. On! on! she could not fail with ardour such as hers, such single-minded constancy; still on! still on! and the future would well pay for all!

Ramasamy had promised them to reach Cabool on the third day: they were now barely seventy miles off: and their daily progress had been nearly thirty.

Her spirits had indeed well sustained her, to even beyond her physical ability; and though the yearnings of her soul for rest and peace came on her like the longings of a saint for heaven, and urged her still to persevere, she felt that the struggle could not be much longer continued: that the time was near when she would be beyond one.

CHAPTER XIV.

'Twas a deceitful calm : the mountain top,
Peace, as it seem'd, each green, each lovely spot,
Trembled with fires intestinal, whose rage
Convulsive—wild ! did outbreak fierce presage.

THE next evening had brought them to a large village not more than a long day's journey from the capital. The greatest excitement prevailed : resentment and revenge seemed to be working into some fearful outbreak, and there was a brooding sullenness in the people, a neglect of accustomed occupations, which declared, plainly enough, that the seeming calm would not long maintain.

Tidings came daily from the seat of govern-

ment : the British troops were quietly in their cantonment before the city : the old Shah, to uphold whom they were there, seemed peacefully on his throne ; and, to appearance, all was well. But there was a spirit abroad, growing stronger day by day, that mocked the blind security of the invaders, that only waited for opportunity to rise up and hurl defiance on their arms.

It was sufficiently evident, that with the wild animosity so rife about, any betrayal of their being English people, would be outrage—even death to our travellers : they all felt that. Of the Ayah they were sure enough, for she knew little, and they kept her a kind of prisoner, nor allowed her power to disclose the fact ; but of Ramasamy all had doubts, even before they had divulged them to each other, had some undefined impression to his prejudice occurred to each of the party. And although he had so far brought them on in safety, and in conformity with his agreement, there had been an apparent indecision in his manner, a kind of unwillingness to proceed, which more than once had alarmed them.

There was little doubt, indeed, that some

strong struggle was going on in the old man's mind, of so nicely a balanced nature, that a mere accident would probably decide it. And if such were the fact, a mere accident did decide it: for the following morning, when they were preparing for the day's journey, Ramasamy was really ill from violent internal pain, his mind utterly prostrated.

The cause of his ailment was evident enough to Newbery, who persuaded him (for the old man was in too great agony, and far too much frightened, to be troubled by minor considerations) to take some antidote he had prepared; the beneficial effects of which, assisted by Newbery's close attention, were promptly seen in his relief.

The attack, however, left him very weak and very timid. He was so frightful of a relapse, that he could not bear the idea of Newbery's leaving him; and evidently ashamed to be dependent on a man whom he had viewed with such disfavour, he seemed to wish to make up for the past by present kindness.

To be sure, there was but one way for a mind

like Ramasamy's to compensate a favour: with him, did not money or money's worth appear, there was, there could not be any valid return for benefits conferred; and so he offered Newbery some of his favourite mammon, and was considerably astonished to find that he refused it, opening his little sunken eyes very much wider than they had been previously aware of any capacity of opening.

Newbery made him understand that he would be well content, if he but insured his lady's safety.

"But would he stay with him," he asked, "till no fear of relapse?"

"Yes, anything," Newbery replied, hoping at once to conciliate his favour, and secure an additional interest in the old man's mind towards Ada: "do but see us safely through."

"Will do," he replied; for when Ramasamy was very much interested or excited, or when he chose, he could make himself tolerably well understood in English, though he always pretended ignorance of the language; "will do: make very safe Missie."

"And, as you know, her friends shall pay you far more than the agreement."

"Very good pay," he said, chuckling; "very nice Missie; very good pay; very pretty Missie."

"Then mind you do your duty to her," Newbery rejoined; "she may be of service to you in more ways than money."

"Have her power with the Cauzee?"

"Very great, indeed, Ramasamy; you see one of his officers attends to protect her."

"Very good, very good," he said, thoughtfully; "I asked this Golab—he no tell."

"Probably not. Golab is not very wise; but it is so. Why do you ask?"

"I very large money at Madras," he opened his hands very widely, to show how large. "Bad man no pay: can master judge make pay?"

"Surely, surely," Newbery looked excessively important, for he saw he had the old man in his power: "make friends with the lady, Ramasamy, and your business is done."

"Such large money!" he continued, thoughtfully. "Have Missie power?"

"Try her, Ramasamy : gain her favour, and, depend on it, you are right."

"Will do, will do," he spoke still very thoughtfully, and sunk into one of his very deepest meditations.

But the result this time was very satisfactory ; his whole manner seemed to be changed ; the odd, ungracious points rubbed down, and he, every way, most accommodating.

Newbery had, of course, told Ada the particulars of the conversation, and she was prepared to follow up the suggestion, as circumstances permitted.

Their progress had, of necessity, been delayed by Ramasamy's indisposition ; but he soon recruited sufficiently well to allow them to proceed ; and the old man's increased interest in them soon showed itself in a variety of ways. Its first evidence was in his great care of their individual appearance.

Ada was covered up in the close hood and veil, such as is worn by the Affghan ladies, and which entirely shrouded her features. She was to pass off for a young wife he was taking home ; the two men were dressed up as his servants, and put

in charge of the camels ; and himself, more important than ever, trotted on with the lady, taking care to make the very most to her of his provisions for her safety.

Nor was he long without taking advantage of his position, to commence the subject of the great law case—he deemed it the very greatest had ever been known—which was simply the keeping back, under false pretences, of considerable monies, which were due to him from a native bazaar merchant, and which, in his fancied doubt of having justice done to him, he had not dared to seek by legal means.

He seemed well content with Ada's assurances of propitiating the judge in his favour, and more particularly so with the interest she appeared to take in his statement ; and perhaps, though all the party were well pleased with their improved position, not one of them was more so than Ramasamy himself, who, for once, was quite satisfied with his calculations, as he had secured a good and certain pay for the present, and most capital influence for his future benefit ; and all for merely performing a simple contract.

Golab, too, had made himself more happy, by betraying to his mistress the purport of Ramasamy's conversations with him, and which had given rise to Newbery's distrust. It was the same story, trying to learn how far she would have weight with the judge.

"Don't tell him great power," Golab said, knowingly ; "tell him he do what Missie like."

"That is rather going too far, Golab."

"Don't know, Missie. Missie plenty much can do."

"Well, we will see, Golab ; but don't talk too much ; you cannot be too wary."

"Know Master Newbery tell so, and Missie listen."

"No, no, Golab ; I listen to nothing to your prejudice ; I am too much beholden—owe you too much to do that."

"I would anything do to serve Missie—that plenty true."

"I believe it, Golab—entirely believe it ; so be content, and don't think unkindly of Newbery, to whom we are mainly indebted for our

safety. We had need to be united among ourselves in this unfriendly land."

"Missie tell plenty true that—wish Missie never come."

"If Missie, Golab, had known all it would have cost her, mayhap she had not come; but here we are, and now, it is to be hoped, have nigh surmounted all our difficulties."

"I hope same like, Missie."

Their progress, that day, was difficult from the great inequalities of the road, though still, as it had been since their journey with Ramasamy, almost a continual rise, and it was deemed advisable to make another halt for the night at one of the bazaars on the hills. They had caught a glimpse of Cabool in the far distance, lying in the rich plain amid its rocky boundaries, and could distinguish the encampment of the British troops on the flat before it. Oh! how Ada's heart beat! They were still a dozen miles off; the sun had already set, and Ramasamy feared to pass near the troops or even through the camp-followers at that time of evening, as well for their own safety, as for that of the valuable

commodities with which his camels were laden. And loud and deep were the old man's curses, that the city of his fathers should be profaned by the foot of a hostile foe. But wild as were his denunciations, he never once referred them to the party under his care; he seemed as if he had forgotten that there really was English blood amongst them, or more probably, that he had determined to sink all perception of it in the beneficial consequences that would result to him from their charge. He had too, become quite facetious with them, had descended materially from his previous importance, and sought, in every way, to ingratiate himself with the whole party, evidently wishing them to part with him on good terms.

So far, all was well and promised a favourable result. He was still very unsettled in the matter of his health; and held long, and, probably, somewhat tedious conferences with Newbery thereon, which the latter had the tact to turn to advantage, by depressing the old man's estimate of his perfect recovery, and elevating his notions of his own medical ability; much to the increase

of his previous friendly disposition towards them. Ramasamy had also been enlightening them, some little, on a few of the events of his life. And very few, indeed, they were for a man who had travelled nearly three thousand miles annually for forty years ; even the occurrences of his many journeys, and he must of necessity have met with strange adventures, had left no trace on his mind, which was, indeed, but one chronicle of money-making—of many gains and small losses.

In the matter of his household arrangements, Ramasamy's life had been far too busy and too errant to make much account of the common item of wives ; he had had a few, certainly, but more as the making up of his importance, as a part and portion of that supreme effect, it was his ambition to produce on all beholders, than for any more wanted object. Some of whom had managed, from time to time, to fill his harem with a variety of small Ramasamys, who, in process of time, had died, married, or wandered off from the parent stem ; until all that was left to him was one only daughter, the child of his old age, his best and dearest one, who solaced his

downhill path of life and would, never, as he believed, quit him.

The old man spoke of his Zulmanie, as if it were, with a lover's praise, talked of her beauty and her grace, as if she were a very Peri; and indeed it was evident enough that he *thought* what he spake. And Ada still farther advanced herself in his good graces⁹ by listening to his eulogies, and re-echoing them as if the veritable graces of the fair Zulmanie were palpably before them.

It had already been decided that Ada should proceed in the first instance to Ramasamy's house, until she could ascertain where her friends were located; an arrangement as really valuable to Ada in her unprotected state, as it was kind in him who offered it; it certainly was no part of the agreement; and Ada naturally looked forward with curiosity to an introduction to the young beauty, though not seeing much signs from her paternity of any such endowment, she thought that it rather rested in the fancies of a doting old man; or perchance, as everything that belonged to Ramasamy was of an especially

excellent quality, unapproachable by ordinary comparisons, the daughter might be one of the analogies and chime in with the rest.

Ada, however, was thankful to have gained a friend in the old man, pompous as he was ; after all her perils, and alarms, and the treachery of her former guide it was something—and no very indifferent something either, to have really secured his favour and protection.

Though now, indeed, brief would be her need of his good offices. The coming morrow—blessed was the thought ! They talk of the fainting mariner, tossed on the tempest wave, with death and terror round him, and tell his feelings as the haven of refuge opens to receive him. They tell of the snow-girt traveller, overtaken on his mountain-track by the furious storm, all traces of his way covered up, himself wild with dismay, while the wilder storm rushes on, amid cold and darkness, and he lays himself down in despair to die ; they tell of his ecstasy when the mountain-dogs follow on to the rescue, and he finds himself basking before the convent's hospitable hearth.

But it was nothing to the transport of Ada's feelings, when, after all her sufferings, she found herself within sight of the certain reward of her trials—the recompense of her constant purpose! It was indeed very pain to think of her approaching happiness: trouble and doubt—it was the old tale!—had so long weighed her down with their cold, unyielding pertinacity, that her heart seemed almost afraid to expand before the coming joy, as if it were a bliss such as is not permitted to creatures of time and sense, and she almost shrunk from indulging in its anticipation.

She could not sleep—sleep, indeed! it would have been a desecration of her thoughts to have permitted it; and she lay, the night through, thinking of the hastening joy—again and again acting over its minutest details. And glad she was when the early dawn arrived, and she could rise from her restless couch, and look in the direction where *he* was, and know that scarcely an hour's ride separated them.

Ramasamy, however, not having any similarly exciting motive to disturb him, and, moreover,

being not disinclined to a little extra indulgence since his indisposition, by no means answered her impatience by his movements ; although the day was yet but young when, at length, their cavalcade again set forth, Ramasamy being desirous of passing by the encampment, if possible, before its full turmoil had been awakened into activity.

They had soon descended into the plain, and the ancient city stood before them, as if it were, swelling with indignation before the hostile army, by which it was so closely invested. Such, at least, were Ramasamy's impressions, as he rode slowly and dejectedly past the teeming mass, scarcely able to restrain the indignant wrath wherewith his capacious bulk was swelling.

Far different were the feelings which rioted in Ada's breast, as, scarcely able to contain her impatience, her quick, inquiring eye wandered restlessly about for some sign, by which she could feel the fact of her position. It seemed almost like a dream ; she had so long followed after her eager purpose ; it had so long evaded

her grasp, and so long seemed as a something in the far distance, still—still to be attained by protracted exertions and persevering struggles, that now, when the reality had actually come, it seemed less like the reality than ever, and she almost feared to confront it.

They did not pass very near to the troops, which were in cantonment, about a mile from the city, but they saw numbers enough of the camp-followers, the bulk of the native sepoys having brought their whole families with them, children, wives, mothers, even grandmothers, who gave it more the appearance of a huge fair, congregating for some festive, rather than any hostile purpose.

The —th Foot were in cantonment; Newbery had gleaned that fact by some means or other, and took an opportunity of whispering it to Ada.

But the party went on leisurely enough, neither molestation nor annoyance being offered to them; and passing through the incongruous mass, entered the city, wending slowly through

its narrow streets, until, in process of time, they drew up before a high, terraced house, where Ramasamy commenced the arduous undertaking of dismounting; and having seen Ada safely on her feet, he led her up the steps, and, in due process of time, introduced her to the matchless Zulmanie.

And certainly a very pretty girl she was, apparently about fifteen years of age, with a merry face, and a very roguish eye. She was dressed in a rich, embroidered skirt, worked in flowers of silk, her white trowsers contrasting beautifully with its rich, bright colours, and the brighter colours of her tunic, which, bound round her waist by an elaborately worked shawl, showed off her full figure to advantage. She wore her hair in two large plaits around her head, fastening it behind with a golden and silver chain, from which two large balls of chased gold hung down near her ears—the dress, indeed of a married woman, but which the wayward girl chose to adopt, she best knew why.

Ramasamy had apprised his daughter of Ada's

coming, and very comfortable apartments were prepared for her ; in fact, it was evident enough, that everything was to be done to make her content, and to leave the very best impressions on her mind.

CHAPTER XV.

An arrow from his quiver first he sought,
And shot it forth, that so they might be taught,
Ere yet himself appear'd, that he was nigh,
To bid them raise the wassail bowl on high.

ADA had scarcely refreshed herself, than, seeking out her writing materials, she sat down to pen the following note :

“ An English lady, just arrived at Cabool, from Bombay, having a letter of introduction to Mrs. Prudhoe, requests the favour of a personal interview : she would do herself the pleasure of visiting her at the earliest hour Mrs. Prudhoe might appoint.”

Having sealed her note, she sent for Newbery, and commissioned him to take it.

She felt that it was needful to say more to him—that it was indispensable to take some one into her confidence, painful as the betrayal was, and no one seemed so eligible as Newbery for the office.

“Mrs. Prudhoe may ask my name,” she continued, “but I wish to be my own herald; you can merely say, as indeed the truth really is, that you do not know it.”

“Yes, my lady, that I may, safely.”

“Of course you will wait for Mrs. Prudhoe’s reply, and bring it me as quickly as you can.”

“At once, my lady,” and Newbery prepared for instantly fulfilling his errand.

“But stay a moment,” Ada said, and she felt how much, in spite of herself, she blushed, “I wish you, also, but quietly, Newbery, and, above all, so that Mrs. Prudhoe may not suspect it—I would wish you to inquire whether Mr. Smythe is in the camp, and that he is well.”

“Mr. Smythe?” Newbery repeated, to be sure of the name.

"Mr. Howard Smythe," how Ada faltered to speak the name! "he is a particular friend of mine, Newbery."

"I will not fail, lady," Newbery said, as he quitted the apartment.

Ada needed not to have blushed so much, if, indeed, her blushing arose from any impression that it was a first hint of the truth. The object of her wanderings was already known to Newbery well enough, Golab having picked up sufficient, from the first Ayah and Maria's communications at Bombay, to place them pretty accurately on the true scent.

And now, thought Ada, it will soon be suspense no more. How her heart fluttered as she thought it!

But Zulmanie had returned to her: it seemed such a delight to the girl to have some one, near her own age, to talk to; and a real English lady too—that was most delightful! It had been her great ambition to become mistress of the language, her mother, indeed, had been a half-caste; her father's many long journeys and intercourse with the English, and the English

dresses which he brought her back on his return from his lengthened absences, had given rise to a very decided English taste in the young lady, which not all her father's national animosity could interfere with. He had given her a great charge to attend to Ada's wishes, telling her what immense results were to follow from the lady's influence with the Cauzee.

And, it would seem, she was only too well inclined to follow up his injunctions.

"May Zulmanie come?" she said, in a very beseeching voice. "Lady want nothing?"

"No, thank you, Zulmanie," Ada said, glad of something to divert the intensity of her thoughts; "I am enjoying these delightful ottomans—such a luxury after my long journeyings."

"Lady really come from very England?" she scrutinized her with extreme curiosity as she spoke; "she very beautiful!"

"I am surely enough from England," Ada said.

"Did lady ride all way?" she asked, very simply.

"Not exactly," Ada said, smiling; "there are great seas between us, Zulmanie."

"Father said lady ride," she seemed unaware of any great mistake. "Lady very pretty."

"Do you think so, Zulmanie?" Ada was much amused at her earnestness.

"Do, lady, sure;" and she added, archly, "and lady knows it, too; but not all English ladies so pretty, I know."

"How do you know, Zulmanie? What opportunities have you had of judging?"

"Runjeet seen English soldier ladies: he says not pretty as Zulmanie," she looked particularly arch.

"And who is Runjeet, pray?"

"But don't tell father—mind hush—no whisper—Runjeet love Zulmanie."

Poor Ramasamy! thought Ada, and his fond fancies that his child would never leave him!

"And Zulmanie him, I suppose?" Ada said.

"Runjeet think so," she spoke very proudly.

"Lady should see my Runjeet."

"Your Runjeet, Zulmanie?"

"Yes, lady, he my lover; and such handsome lover! though don't know would like him see lady."

"Why, Zulmanie, what harm would it do to him?"

"Lady too much pretty—make Zulmanie jealous: any girl would love Runjeet."

"And what is Runjeet, pray?"

"He warrior, soldier—I think captain you call."

"And your father not know of your lover, Zulmanie?"

"No, no," she spoke hurriedly; "he so fond of Zulmanie—would say Runjeet no; but Zulmanie say yes."

Alas! 'twas the old story—the ancient love succumbing to the new. Ada could have told her that such things were in other climes; apart almost as the globe's circumference, that the same influences broke through as fond a dream as even her father trusted in.

"Your father will never part with you, Zulmanie," she said, earnestly—it was a painful subject; "he dotes on you too much."

"But Runjeet more dote, and Zulmanie still love father. Do English ladies give lovers up and keep to fathers, lady, always?"

It was rather a home question. Ada could not answer yes.

"No, not when lovers are beautiful, as my Runjeet!" she exclaimed, with rapture; "he so tall, so handsome face—and eyes so dark, so large—that seem as if they would eat you up; and he so brave!—Zulmanie very proud of Runjeet."

And indeed she spoke with all the rapture of a girl's first love. It was, in truth, a very decided case, which all poor Ramasamy's influence would in vain attempt to put down. Ada saw that, well enough: she knew that her own father's love had failed to save the blight in her own heart; how could the warmer blood of this daughter of an eastern clime reject the fond influence, when her thoughts, her very life was love!

But Ramasamy's step was heard.

"Mind, lady no tell," the girl said, earnestly; "and lady shall see Runjeet by, by."

Her father entered the apartment as she was speaking.

"All to mind, Missie?" he inquired: "Zulmanie plenty kind?"

"Could not be more so," Ada briefly answered.

"Would Missie writing like send to friends?"

Oh, the mammon! Ada thought—it might not be so, but some better motive, in spite of constitutional influences.

She, however, thought it politic to content the old man on one point, and, taking out a small packet she had prepared, gave it to him.

"That is my pay, Ramasamy, with the one-fourth more that I promised."

"No, Missie, no," he said, impatiently, as if ashamed to let the ruling passion have its sway before his child. "Large money! Missie give hand to Cauzee—big law case—large money there."

"Take it, Ramasamy," Ada repeated; "it is well yours; and I give it with pleasure for your extra kindness to me. Doubt me not: I will do all I can for you in the law matter, but I must insist on this."

Ramasamy yet hesitated, for his daughter's

eyes were still on him, and it was an evident struggle between shame and mammon ; but Zulmanie looked away for a moment, and the packet was quietly concealed in his capacious belt.

Ada knew it was a great point gained ; she saw that, in the evident chuckle in Ramasamy's little smirking eye.

" But the writing, Missie ?" he again asked : " have found messenger ?"

" I have already sent, good Ramasamy, by Newbery."

" Very bad that !" he exclaimed, in some alarm : " he may be known—Missie not wise—make trouble sometime."

" I am sorry if I have done wrong, my friend ; but I was so anxious."

" 'Fraid Missie, 'fraid," and he shook his head very ominously : " much bad anger about. Ramasamy can do much ; he no very small man at Cabool ; but bad times, Missie, bad times."

" You may depend on me for the future," Ada said ; and her host very impressively removed himself from her presence.

"He so 'fraid, lady" Zulmanie said, in a cautious whisper, "lest lady be known to be English."

"I am sorry I have acted contrary to his wishes," Ada said; "it did not occur to me."

"I *could* tell why he so 'fraid," Zulmanie said, mysteriously. "Can lady sure keep most large secret?"

"Surely, Zulmanie; if it be a *real* secret."

"Very real, very," the girl said, earnestly; "and perhaps father may have heard it too. Runjeet say there will be fight soon: he tell Zulmanie not to leave house, for fear of hurt. Runjeet know everything."

"I hope he is mistaken, Zulmanie, nevertheless."

"But I mind Runjeet, lady; he is so very handsome, and so love me."

"You could not well do otherwise, Zulmanie; but still I hope he is wrong—in this instance, at least."

At this moment, Golab applied for admittance. He had been sent on some errand to the bazaars,

in reality to prevent his jealousy detecting Newbery's mission.

"Here it is, Missie," giving her the result of his errand. "All right, Missie?"

"Quite so, Golab," Ada said, kindly: "always right, when Golab does it. Such a kind, faithful creature, Zulmanie!—has saved me from such dangers."

"Very good Golab," the young lady assented; "very kind."

"I can indeed put much, very much into the writing, Golab," Ada continued; "I cannot put too much, though indeed I shall be very, very sorry to give you a writing at all."

"Why, Missie?" he asked, in quick alarm.

"Because I shall be so very loth to part with you; but I must not be selfish, Golab; so, whenever you wish to return, it shall be ready."

"Missie not tired of Golab?" he asked, anxiously; "Missie really not tired?"

"No, Golab; indeed, no," and she wished her manner to give additional assurance; "but you have fulfilled your trust; and this cold climate,

with the winter setting in, so strange and unused to you, are all arguments for your getting away as soon as you can."

"But Missie not tired of Golab?"

"Certainly not; quite the contrary."

"Then Golab not go, till Missie all safe and right; he done promised master so—and such nice Missie."

"Well, Golab, I am very glad to have you near me."

"Plenty content, Missie," and Golab retired.

"There could not be a more faithful creature," Ada said, "though I took a strange dislike to him at the outset."

"He not well-looking man, indeed," Zulmanie said.

"But he has won my heart by his fidelity, Zulmanie."

"Zulmanie like fidelity too, especially in Runjeet."

Ada's reply was stayed; Newbery had returned; he brought a note. Ada could scarcely

command herself; she hurriedly requested Zulmanie to retire, and quickly breaking the seal, read its contents; they were thus:—

“ Mrs. Prudhoe presents her compliments, will be happy to receive the English lady at any time she may find it convenient to call on her.

“ Camp of the —th Foot, in Cantonment.”

“ Of course, you saw the lady, Newbery: did she question you much?”

“ Pretty well, my lady, for she is a great talker, and asks many questions in a breath, giving very little opportunity for the answers.”

“ But you answered some?”

“ Undoubtedly, my lady: I told her that the lady was young, and very handsome: she would have found that out herself, when she saw you. Of course, I kept to my ignorance of your name—I could not help that; denied all knowledge of the friend who introduced you, although I might perhaps have guessed.”

"I am not sure that you would, Newbery."

"She named several names, my lady, and one that I might have acknowledged to, though I did not. She is, however, very fidgetty for the interview, and I am certain it will be a great charity to end her suspense."

"Any other information, Newbery?" Ada asked, with a very conscious look.

"I saw Mr. Smythe, my lady." Ada's heart might well beat: "he was with the lady when I went to her, a young, handsome, merry-looking man,"—Ah! thought Ada, it was he, no doubt—"and the very picture of health." Her very soul swelled with joy, as she heard it. "He made the lady ten times more inquisitive by his teasing her; he too, is very desirous to know who the English lady is, and is to be sent for, when she arrives."

Did he guess, Ada asked herself, did he even suspect the truth? still so merry? but why should she be annoyed, that he should be merry? was it simply that *her* spirits were too oppressed to feel any such buoyancy?

"The cantonment is situated quite on the opposite side of the town," Newbery continued, seeing that she was silent; "and there seems much excitement abroad. I only now met their chief, the Akbar Khan, of whom Ramasamy speaks so much, going in a towering passion towards the cantonment, and a turbulent-looking fellow he seems."

"I fear that some outbreak is impending," Ada said, "so the sooner I seek my interview, Newbery, the better. What is the lady like, pray?"

"Tall, but spare; a quick eye, very intellectual head; with friendly and engaging manners, as far as I could judge from her behaviour to Mr. Smythe: he is evidently a great favourite with her, as also with another lady, who was with Mrs. Prudhoe."

"Another lady!" Ada said, unconsciously; she feared to ask what Newbery meant; after all, was Edith really right, and Howard the actual flirt she called him?

"Yes, my lady," Newbery said, "a very

merry, pretty woman, and such elegant manners ! they called her Mrs. Dundas."

Ada felt somewhat relieved, it was a mere *pour passer le temps* matter after all ; but she determined that, at least, suspense and doubt should be ended.

"I will pay my visit instantly, Newbery ; you will, of course, accompany me : though we must advise with our host ; perhaps his own, as well as our safety may depend upon our prudence. Will you see him for me, and ask him to prepare the means for my going—and as soon as possible."

"I hear his step now," Newbery said, and quitted the apartment, leaving Ada almost sick with expectation and excitement.

At length had come the end of her toil, the reward of her constancy. Would Howard still think her—not as beautiful as when she first won his heart, for she knew that her long trials and her exposure to the scorching sun, had left their traces upon her features : but would he think her as lovable ? would he love her as well ? would he

be as delighted to see her ? as—oh, no ! that was indeed impossible—as she was to meet him. No, no ! *he* had not lived for so many months on that one fond hope, that one rapturous anticipation of their reunion, which had been *her* existence ; for which she had sacrificed so much—dared so much !—he had not abandoned every other thought for that one—that only one !—did Ada not know, that only a woman could have felt that singleness, that devotedness of love !

Howard had met with duties, ay, and amusement too, to divert the desolate feeling, in his breast, of parted love : *he* could laugh, ay, and be merry—that merry man ! Poor Ada ! how much and often had that descriptive galled and fretted her !

Newbery, however, soon came back. Ramasamy would send her to pay the visit in his own nalkee—the palanquin of the country, of a much more gaudy appearance, indeed, than those of Hindostan, but less compact and far less convenient.

And Newbery might accompany her, along with one of his own servants.

They would be ready in less than a quarter of an hour.

Ada instantly retired to prepare herself.

CHAPTER XVI.

Still onward flew that dove—its flight,
Reckless of storm or tempest blight,
She yet maintained ;
Still on ! until her anxious breast,
Yearning for home, that much-loved rest,
Deem'd she had gain'd.

RAMASAMY himself saw Ada safely deposited in the nalkee ; he had carefully inspected her adornment, which, though rather contrary to Ada's wishes, were those of an Affghan lady.

"Cabool lady must seem, Missie," he said, earnestly ; "not let know but wife ; no Missie much stay ; much anger about."

Ada promised all kind of concurrences, and the bearers moved away; Newbery on the one side, and Ramasamy's servant on the other.

They had not, however, proceeded very far, when the men drew up suddenly; and hurrying as close to the side buildings as they could stood still for some moments.

"Akbar Khan is passing back," Newbery spoke to her through the covering of her nalkee. Ada instantly looked in the way he pointed.

The street, at this point, was so narrow, that it barely admitted the passage of a camel's load, so that the gorgeous trappings of the Prince's Arab steed brushed against them.

He was a dark, handsome-looking man, of about six-and-twenty; his flowing mantle, of bright colours, sat gracefully on him, and his ample turban, of the richest cashmere shawl, boasted of a jewelled ornament and egret plume; that well bespoke his rank, and the high regard in which he was held; since none but a monarch's favour could have sanctioned his wearing them.

He spurred his horse impatiently past them,

and it was evident enough that he was hurried on by some wild storm of passion, far beyond any power of his impetuous will to restrain.

"There is mischief brewing there," Newbery said to Ada, as they watched him by; "I never saw a more imperious eye—never but one that might be compared to it, and that was in Bohkara."

"I wish we were all well away," Ada said, as she sunk back in the nalkee.

The attendants on the Prince had scarcely filed by, than the bearers passed forward: they had taken the longer way, so as to avoid all unnecessary notice, as also to escape any chance tumult, should the growing excitement have proceeded to such.

At length, they had cleared the Kohistan gate, and soon, at the distance of about a mile, had reached the cantonment, where, directed by Newbery, Ada was conducted to Mrs. Prudhoe's tent, and had speedily announced her arrival.

She was immediately invited in, and a lady answering Newbery's description of the Major's lady, bade her welcome.

To whom was she indebted, the lady asked, for the honour of the visit? looking somewhat surprised at Ada's anything but English costume.

Ada at once placed Edith's note in her hand:

"I ought, perhaps, Mrs. Prudhoe," she said, "to apologize for not having enclosed the note in mine this morning, but I was anxious to deliver it in person."

Mrs. Prudhoe had hastily broken the seal:

"Ah, Edith James!" she exclaimed, in a good-tempered, rather shrill voice, "dear, kind-hearted soul! was she quite well? still waging war against the sex? no doubt—still charming and teasing them—eh?" she seemed engrossed with the contents of the note; "is it possible?" and she looked earnestly at Ada, who was too much embarrassed by her feelings to speak: "I do love Edith," she continued, "much and warmly, for there is an originality and singleness of purpose about her that is truly estimable. I am sure it will give me pleasure to be of service to her friend—Miss Gower."

"Edith knew me by that name," Ada said in an agitated voice, "when she wrote her note, but she became acquainted with my real one before we parted; there were circumstances, Mrs. Prudhoe—reasons—which—my real name is Greville."

"What, Ada Greville?" she asked, instantly.

"The same." Ada was greatly astonished at her question.

"Is it possible?" the lady continued, "really and truly possible that you have wandered from old England into this savage land, after—ah! I see how it is—I have heard a certain friend of mine rave of your beauty again and again; and, indeed, poor child, you are worth a man's raving after—too, too beautiful, by far, to follow any man across a whole hemisphere."

"Spare me!" Ada said, beseechingly, "in pity, spare me!"

"Well, well—poor child!" she went on; "Howard is a nice fellow after all, much as he wants stability of character. But how did you manage to get to Cabool? they say the country

is in a fearful state—come with any fresh troops ? —under whose care, pray, Miss Greville ? dear me, it is a long, long way !—does Howard know ? naughty man ! not to tell me, though he is constantly with me, talking, and laughing, and joking, like anything but a lover. Howard Smythe really in love ? My poor child ! have you any warrant for your seeking him ? If I must say what I think—but no—he is so near, he shall not be prejudiced.”

“I *have* a warrant,” Ada answered to the more prominent of her many notices, “a very valid warrant,” her voice faltered—she bent her blushing face to the ground ; “he was my accepted lover—but for his sudden orders to India, I should have been his wife.” Ada turned away her face, ashamed, distressed.

“Can it be possible !” Mrs. Prudhoe again exclaimed, “and never tell ! do let me send for him, to rate him to his face, the hair-brained, rattling fellow, that he is ; and—don’t be jealous, dear Miss Greville—flirting with every pretty face that comes in his way ; nay, if I am not egregiously mistaken, Edith James herself could

tell you of certain small passages of that sort. My dear young lady, is it not possible you may have sought the wrong Howard Smythe? there *might* be another—I do not aver there is."

"Howard may have concealed his engagement from pride," Ada said, coldly, "to avoid being teased, to save himself from annoyance, but"—and Ada held herself up proudly as she spoke it—"I would as soon doubt my existence, that this is Cabool, and I talking with Mrs. Prudhoe, as doubt Howard's truth and affection."

"Well, well, my poor child!" she spoke, soothingly, "do not vex yourself; it may be possible, after all, that you are right and I wrong; but of this I am sure, and say it too, that neither Howard Smythe, or any other man in the whole list of them is worth the sacrifice or the perils that you must have encountered for my graceless friend—graceless, mind, not to have told me; and if I am to suppose, from what Edith says, that you have undertaken this long chase alone, without any protection but a menial, and sought us amidst our frightful perils, I will

only say, that your devotion should be written up in letters of gold to shame the whole mass of selfish mankind, as Edith would say. But now, my dear Miss Greville, no doubt you want some aid from me, and Edith may have told you, that I am not one who is so fond of *professing*, as of *doing* any kind offices in my humble power; so now tell me, what can I do, and what do you wish me to do for you? I need not say you may command me."

"I thank you, dear Madam, for your kindness," Ada said, impatiently. "I do seek a favour at your hands—to enable me to see Howard," she again drew herself proudly up; "and if he fails me—if his delight to meet me is less rapturous than my own—if he does not gladly admit the tie that binds our hearts together—I'll never more believe yon sun shines upon the earth, or that earth itself holds aught but falsehood and disgust."

"Well, well, my poor child," she kindly said, "do not excite yourself unduly. You shall see him, and promptly too; indeed, I promised him

that he should see the pretty Englishwoman, as your messenger declared you to be, and he is not far distant: but compose yourself, my dear Miss Greville; this agitation is most distressing: shall I send now? at once?—say but the word.”

“A moment’s pause, dear Madam,” Ada trembled as she spoke. “I have looked forward to this moment, for weeks and months, as an ecstasy beyond all thought of human joy; and now, that it has come, instead of joy, it is perfect anguish to me; not, indeed, for any doubt of the result—for never woman trusted in man’s devoted love, as I do in Howard’s for me; it is not that, but that the feeling is too overpowering.”

“My dear child,” Mrs. Prudhoe said, kindly, “this will never do. We must not let this piece of mankind see into the weakness of our camp. Come, cheer up, my dear, and I will send for Howard: do not look so distressed. I will use the privilege of a friend, and do what I think is kindness to you.” She called her servant, and bade him fetch Mr. Smythe. “And now, my dear girl, what has passed here is as sacred as

truth; but do not let us betray ourselves farther."

"Trust me, dear Madam," Ada said, proudly; "I have not had occasion to disguise my feelings before Howard Smythe, nor is the time come now for me to do so."

"Do not be vexed, my sweet girl," Mrs. Prudhoe said, with a propitiatory smile; "I mean only kindness; I am altogether *your* partisan."

"A thousand thanks," Ada quickly answered: "I am troubled and disquieted, but not vexed. Oh! no, no; I could not be so ungrateful."

At this moment, a footstep approached the tent, and she heard a voice ask, "Was Mrs. Prudhoe within?"

There was no mistaking it; it was the same glorious voice! Ada scarcely breathed.

Howard had entered the tent; the same handsome, joyous creature. Ada would fain have thrown herself into his arms, restrained, perhaps, by Mrs. Prudhoe's presence; it might be to first see how he would bear the recognition.

Howard looked towards her : for a moment, her Affghan dress prevented his recognizing her.

" The English lady," Mrs. Prudhoe said, somewhat maliciously.

He looked again, seemingly as rather struck with some resemblance, than as suspecting the truth : he seemed troubled.

Ada for a moment waited to delay his perplexity, that she might enhance the surprize; and then, in her own sweet voice, said :

" Howard !"

To see the start, the utter astonishment !

" Good God !" he exclaimed, " Ada Greville !" He stood confused and agitated.

The pause was fearful : to Ada, at least, it was unbearable.

" Did you not receive my letter at Bellary, Howard ?" she asked, with a trembling voice.

" Letter !" Howard repeated, scarcely less agitated than herself ; " no, none ever reached me." And then, as if he felt the necessity of saying something, " And who brought you to this rude country, Ada ?"

" I have come almost alone, Howard," she

said, faintly ; “ merely one faithful attendant ; and I have passed through such perils ! ”

“ And *wherefore* have you come ? ” he asked, hurriedly ; but he knew well enough—his down-cast eye declared that he knew.

“ Will not your own heart tell you, Howard ? ” she asked so earnestly ; “ need I speak it ? ”

No ! he dared not bid her do that ! His agitated looks, and the deep shame that marked his countenance, was sufficient admission that his heart could tell—*had* told him wherefore.

“ I thought it was all past,” he said, but it was not Howard’s glorious voice that said it, but a husky, hollow one, as if a knave had spoken : “ I thought you would have forgotten me.”

“ Forgotten you, Howard ? ” Ada could barely contain her indignation. “ No, no, do not add falsehood to baseness : you know I could not forget you. And is it possible ? after all my sufferings, and the perilous wanderings I have known, to meet with no better welcome than these cold, heartless looks ? Then, alas ! Ada’s heart is indeed desolate.”

"Forgive me, dearest Ada," he said, with quick impetuosity; "surprise, astonishment, perplexity, overwhelm me, that I know not what I say, or what I do; indeed, indeed, I am not worthy of such devotion—I am ashamed of my unworthiness."

"Enough, Howard," Ada said, proudly; "my eyes are opened at last; and the many tales that I scorned to listen to, as dishonourable to the high character I had deemed Howard Smythe's to be, turn to conviction."

"Forgive me, Ada," he again spoke, and with such contrition; "you take me by surprise. Dear Mrs. Prudhoe, speak for me."

"I see how it is, my young friends," Mrs. Prudhoe said, with much feeling, "there is an evident mistake between you. I have already heard from Howard of the impracticability of your union, and it seems to have been his thought to wean himself, as far as he could, from that which could not be."

Howard had fixed his gaze on Ada, as Mrs. Prudhoe spoke. Her matchless beauty, now lighted up with the deep excitement of the mo-

ment, seemed more rich, more attractive than ever; the old flame burst out afresh; he gazed in the rapture of the months passed by.

"It is enough, dear Madam," Ada said, sternly; "it seems no very grievous thing to wean the thoughts, when man has to do it. It is enough. I admit that my convictions were false; that the high trust and confidence, with which my soul rested on the truth of a traitor, are miserably wronged. Indeed, I had need have saved the indignation wherewith I resented the imputations on his sincerity. Would to God, I had listened in time!"

"Hear me, Ada," Howard said, with wild excitement: "as you value your own peace, and would not drive me to distraction, hear me. On the honour of a soldier and a gentleman, I declare to you, that I have never ceased to love you; that it has only been the belief that our union was impossible that constrained me to attempt—not to forget you, that was beyond any effort—but to reconcile myself to part with the happy dreams I had revelled in so fondly—In mercy forgive me, dearest Ada—"

he would have taken her hand, and pleaded even yet farther; but she snatched it away and drew herself proudly up, as few could do like Ada Greville; her woman's soul swelled within her.

Was it possible? and this the return for all she had endured to reach him? this the sequel of all her fond hopes and fonder dreams? There was nothing in her mind at the moment but intense indignation; she thought not of the miserable reaction which would follow, or she could not have rejected the pleading look, the dejected gaze which watched the sure evidence of her deep condemnation.

"Enough—" she seemed to gasp for breath, "you have stung the heart that loved you; would for your sake, have sacrificed the whole world—have stung it with bitterness! but though it sink under the trial, it would scorn such utter heartlessness." She turned to Mrs. Prudhoe—"To you, kind lady, I cannot too much offer my thanks for your courtesy; and should the remembrance of Ada Greville ever occur to you, think of her as one who never plighted her heart but once—who, for that troth, abandoned every

other tie of life, and made light of terror—to find her lover false.” She forcibly repressed the agitation which was convulsing her, and passed from the tent, without so much as one farther look on him whom she had rejected.

The nalkee was waiting at the opening of the tent, she mechanically seated herself in it, and they bore her away.

“For heaven’s sake! my own dear aunt,” exclaimed Howard, quite frantic with despair, “do send to trace where she goes: I shall go mad, if I lose her!”

END OF VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed by Schulze and Co., 13, Poland Street.







